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P.T.O.

THE (LIFE)
LETTERS AND LITERARY REMAINS
OF
EDWARD BULWER, LORD LYTON


BY
HIS SON

 WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

VOL. I.



LONDON .

 AUL, TRENCH, & CO., 1 PATERNOSTER SQUARE
1883

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P R E F A C E.

MY FATHER'S WISHES on the subject of his unpublished manuscripts were conveyed to me in a letter opened after his death. It expressed a hope that the story of his life, which in one of those manuscripts he had left half told, might perhaps be completed by his son. But only in that case was the imperfect record to be published : and it was his desire that by no one else should any biography of him be written.

For the illustration of his life (if I wrote it) I was authorised to employ such of his literary remains as might appear to me suitable for that purpose. I was also at liberty to publish by themselves any others found sufficiently complete for posthumous publication in a separate form. He wished that all unfinished compositions not reserved for either of these uses should be destroyed.

This letter came to me from the grave, with the last and tenderest expressions of an affection which had been the mainstay of my life. It imposed on me no positive obligation except in the contingencies I have mentioned. But the sanctity of a parental injunction was not needed to ensure my devotion to the known wishes of my dearest friend and benefactor.

The unpublished manuscripts bequeathed me by my father (in addition to his private correspondence and note-books) consist of several dramas completely finished ; an entire volume of his ' History of Athens ' never published ; a few sketches made for some other historical works ; and an immense number of unfinished novels, plays, poems, and essays.

Some of these compositions are the produce of the earliest, others of the intermediate, and others again of the very latest, period of his literary life. For, although his life was passed in writing for the public, the fact is abundantly attested by his manuscripts and note-books, that at every period of it he read more than he wrote, and wrote more than he published.

Great as it is, the number of his unpublished writings is not greater than their variety. They are the fragments of more than half a century of assiduous authorship, accompanied by assiduous study, in almost every department of literature: and, notwithstanding their fragmentary character, they constitute, taken together, a tolerably complete expression of their author's personal feelings, his literary theories, and his peculiar methods of imaginative art, at each successive stage of his intellectual development.

Two only of the original compositions left incomplete by him (the unfinished historical romance of 'Pausanias,' and four acts of a play called 'Darnley') were published after his death. All the other manuscripts have been reserved as materials for the present work: and the nature of the materials employed has prescribed the plan adopted.

The most interesting and instructive realities of my father's life were interwoven with his work as an imaginative author. Had he been known to the world only through his connection with politics, there would have been nothing exceptional in his career, and the story of it might have been shortly told. But rarely has a writer of fiction inspired in a wider circle of readers a more legitimately eager curiosity about his inner life and its relation to his outer circumstances.

Traces of the emotions, the sentiments, the passions and affections, the studies and meditations—the excitements of personal action, and the varieties of individual experience—which in turn affected the character, and promoted or retarded

the growth, of his genius, are more or less apparent in all his works. For no man ever wrote more directly out of his own heart. But they are apparent only as reflected lights and shadows from that hidden world into which biography is a voyage of discovery.

The main purpose, therefore, of this book is to illustrate my father's works by his life, and his life by his works. To some extent its general character is rendered different from that of an ordinary biography by the number of unpublished writings (imaginative in what they describe, but singularly biographical in what they reveal) which contribute to the execution of the plan. To prevent, at the outset, misconception on this point, I have called it—not a Life of my father—but his 'Life, Letters, and Literary Remains.'

For the length at which I have entered into details essential to any complete record of the workings of his mind and heart, or to the adequate illustration of what is indirectly autobiographical in the creations of his fancy, I make no apology, for I think that none is needed. Were it requisite to excuse these particulars, the whole book would be inexcusable. It is written in the conviction that my father's life and character present exceptional features, of peculiar interest to those who have already been interested by his works, or for whom the study of human nature has any attraction. If this conviction be unfounded, no modesty in the design, and no brevity in the execution, would atone for the intrinsic insipidity of the subject.

The individuality I have attempted to describe was many-sided. Of a life so long, so variously active and unceasingly laborious, a life touching, at so many different points, literature, society, and politics—and coupled with a character so complex and uncommon—no true picture could be given by a few rapid strokes, however skilfully applied.

It is the chronicle, rather than the history, of a life that I desire to write. In saying this I mean that my object is to place the reader, as he goes along, not so much at an historical distance from the facts narrated, as at the innermost centre of the situations to which those facts belong.

Neither in the portraiture of my father's character, nor in the record of his conduct, have I sought to reduce a single feature, or suppress a single incident, that seems to me less admirable than the rest. His character, indeed, was in all respects so peculiar, and in each so powerfully pronounced, that it would appear unnatural if its nobler attributes were presented to view without any relation to the smaller and less-attractive particulars which, though but an infinitesimal part of it, were often (and more especially in his younger days) mistaken by superficial observers for the whole man.

I have endeavoured to show, in their true proportion and right relation to each other, not only the essential elements, but also the superficial aspects, of a nature which, to a biographer thoroughly familiar with all its idiosyncrasies, affords no excuse for minimising what was little, because it leaves him no power to magnify what was great, in it.

The effort may have fallen short from want of capacity : it has not been restrained by want of candour. Lacking the skill, I have had no temptation from the desire, to paint a fancy portrait. But I am persuaded that if my father's biography is written, as I have tried to write it, honestly and faithfully, no clumsiness on the part of its writer can render it wholly uninteresting, nor even wholly un instructive. For it is the story of a life in which all the errors were the errors of a good man, and the picture of a character in which all the virtues were those of a great one.

LYTTON.

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EDWARD BULWER, LORD LYTTON

VOL. I.

EVERY description of reader, it may safely be said, will be interested in a literary biography that has just appeared. This is "**The Life of Edward Bulwer, First Lord Lytton**," by his grandson, the Earl of Lytton. "An inherited obligation long overdue" is Lord Lytton's description of his biography of the famous novelist and statesman. "It is now forty years," he writes, "since my grandfather died. He left his papers to his son with instructions that by him, and by no one else, his Life was to be written." As may be recalled, the second Lord Lytton lived only to write an instalment of the work. The present biographer has drawn upon this fragmentary record, but practically has "rewritten the whole story from the beginning." The biography is arranged in six divisions, of which the first is "Autobiographical, 1803-1825"; the second "Personal and Domestic: the Story of a Marriage"; and the third "Literary and Political." Among the illustrations are some interesting portraits.



AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

VOL. 1.

To the
READER OF THIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

IN my father's relation of the first twenty-three years of his life there is a slight chronological error, which may be best corrected here. He was the youngest of three brothers, the only children of General Earle Bulwer, of Heydon in Norfolk, by his marriage with Elizabeth Barbara, the daughter and sole heiress of Richard Warburton Lytton, of Knebworth in Hertfordshire. Their father died during the childhood of his sons. William, the eldest of them, who then succeeded to the paternal estates of Heydon and Dalling in Norfolk, was born in the year 1799, and died, at the age of seventy-six, in 1877, having survived his two younger brothers. Henry, the second son (who in 1871 received the Barony, now extinct, of Dalling and Bulwer), was born in 1801, and died without issue in 1872, at the age of seventy-one. Edward, the youngest of the three, who died at the beginning of 1873 in his seventieth year, has mentioned in his Autobiography that, between his own birth and that of his brother Henry, another boy was born, who died immediately afterwards. But of the short-lived existence of this fourth brother I can find no trace in any parochial or family record.

To my father himself, the exact date of his birth was unknown; nor had he any care to know it. He says of it, in his Autobiography, 'If some curious impertinents are anxious to know in what year of Our Lord that event took place, let

them find it out for themselves.' And, when questioned about it, he would laughingly reply, 'It is a Cretan mystery.' The mystery, however, is resolved, and partly explained, by reference to the register of the parish church of St. Mary-le-bone, Middlesex; which records the fact that Edward George Earle Lytton Bulwer was born on the 25th of May in the year 1803. But it appears from the register that he was not baptised till the 15th of March, 1810, when he was nearly seven years old.

It is not surprising that a child who was seven years old at the time of his baptism should have regarded the date of his birth as a mystery. But to a child of that age the baptismal ceremony must have been, one would suppose, a memorable event; and it is curious that no mention of it is made in his Autobiography, which minutely describes all the other occurrences of his childhood. His ignorance, however, of the exact date of his birth, coupled with the fact that to the last day of his life he looked, and felt, considerably younger than he really was, accounts for the impression under which he lived, and under which his Autobiography was written, that his age was a year or two less than it is shown to have been by the entry in the register of Marylebone Parish. If incurious of the year, he was not indifferent to the month, of his birth. It pleased him to associate his love of spring and youth with the reflection that he was born in May; although it was not among the rural charms ascribed by the courtesy of poets to that generally inclement season that the child's eyes first opened on a world wherein the Maytime of his life was destined to come and go prematurely. The birthplace of Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton, is in London; and the little house where he was born, No. 31 Baker Street, is now occupied by a milliner's shop. This house, however, lacks the interest common to the birthplaces of eminent men. It represents nothing distinguishable in the local influences which

helped to shape the character, and nourish the imagination, of the infant born beneath its roof: The strongest, if not the earliest, impressions made upon his mind by the scenes of his childhood were formed among the sylvan solitudes of the old, and much dilapidated, mansion in Hertfordshire, to which his mother retired shortly after the death of her husband.

The date at which he began to write his Autobiography is not stated on the face of it. There are allusions in it which lead me to believe that he must have written it some time between 1852 and 1855; though I have found among his papers a few autobiographical memoranda dated 1844, and others of apparently earlier date, showing that he had long meditated this account of his life, which carries the story of it to within a few years of his marriage. He himself called it 'Memoirs of a Literary Life:' but he did not complete the design implied by this title. The narrative ends before the literary life begins; so that its original title is inapplicable, and, if adopted here, would raise false expectations. I have linked it to my continuation of the record it leaves unfinished, by dividing it into books, and adding headings to the chapters, but in all other respects it is here presented to the reader just as it was written. My own notes on my father's text are printed within brackets; and whatever else I could collect, to throw light upon that portion of his life comprised within the limits of the Autobiography, is contained in the chapters headed '*supplementary*' or '*illustrative*.'

LYTTON.

BOOK I.
CHILDHOOD
1803—1811

David Barrow Murray.
1 College Row, Calcutta.

CHAPTER I.

(Autobiographical.)

THE BULWERS.

ALL biographies begin by genealogy; and with reason, for many of the influences which sway the destiny that ends not with the grave are already formed before the mortal utters his first wail in the cradle. My paternal family has been settled in Norfolk since the Conquest, and my eldest brother still possesses at Wood Dalling the lands conferred on his ancestor by Aymer de Valence. The name of Bulwer attests the Scandinavian origin of the Norman soldier. For, in its earlier spelling of Bölver, or Bölverk, it occurs as that borne by Sea King and Skald in the chronicles of the Baltic, and forms one of the titles given to Odin himself. The name was, however, apparently known in England before the advent of the great Son of Rou; since, as one of our most erudite antiquarians has remarked, the place called Bulverhithe still speaks of the landing of Bulver the Dane. The county of Norfolk had, previous to the Conquest, been one of the principal establishments of the Anglo-Danish population; and a trifling circumstance connected with the cognomen of my progenitors serves to show how the earlier customs gradually prevailed over those introduced by the conquerors. During the first two or three generations the Bulvers obeyed the Norman fashion, and distinguished themselves by the title of the lands which they held in fief—'de Dalling;' but by the fourth generation at latest, though they still held the same

CHAP.

I.

BOOK

I.

1803-11

lands, they dropped the French designation derived from their territorial possessions, and returned to the rough name of their Scandinavian fathers, which they have retained to this day. It may here be observed that the case appears to have been common in those parts of England held before the Conquest by an Anglo-Danish proprietary, where we still find that the oldest families have Scandinavian, not Norman, names.

The heirs and descendants of the first Bolver de Dalling subsided by natural degrees into obscure and peaceful squire-



HEYDON HALL.

archs. From generation to generation they ate of the meat and drank of the cup, married, got children, '*et his exactis—obeunt.*'

My great-grandfather married the heiress of the Earles of Heydon Hall, which became the family residence. One of these Earles in a former generation bestowed two livings upon the learned community of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge; which livings are still usually presented to such of the founder's kin as may have received their final education at that venerable

college. Whether the quaint and erudite Dr. Bulwer, who somewhere about the reign of King James the First published the singular work called the 'Artificial Changeling,' was or was not of my family, I am unable to say. I cannot find any trace of him in the pedigree.¹

I have heard from my mother, who had seen him in her childhood, that my grandfather Bulwer was singularly handsome in person, and that he had more cultivation of mind than was usual at that day amongst country gentlemen. He had travelled abroad, had achieved 'the Grand Tour,' and his manners had the polish of the old school.² Such was the impression he made upon my mother. In the country he was chiefly known as a keen Whig politician, a hospitable *bon vivant*, and a magistrate so active and acute as to be popularly styled 'The Justice.' His union was blessed by four sons, and two daughters. One of the daughters died a spinster, the other married a soldier of fortune, and vanished from the records of the family. I have heard that these ladies, in their infancy, received instruction in modern languages from the hero of a certain romance, Eugene Aram, who was at that time schoolmaster at Lynn; and I have understood that my grandfather, as the most learned personage amongst the neighbouring gentry, was partial to the society of the self-educated scholar. The late William Godwin

[¹ *Anthropo-metamorphosis, Man-transformed; or the Artificial Changeling; shewing the various ways how divers People alter the Natural Shape of some part of their Bodies* (4to, London, 1653). He also wrote several works on *Dactylology*; *Dress*; *Chirologia, or the Natural Language of the Hand*; *Chironomia, or the Art of Manual Rhetorick*; *Philosophics*, and *Pathomyotomia*. 'From Bulwer's extravagance some illustration is thrown upon one portion of the history of human knowledge. He lived in an age of great learning and of little judgment; at a time when there was a voracious appetite for information, and when fact and fiction were indiscriminately gorged and devoured, by all who sought for the reputation of learning.'—*London Retrospective Review*.

y cousin Colonel Bulwer, who has been at some pains to trace the genealogy of this eccentric namesake, assures me that he undoubtedly belonged to a branch of the Bulwer family.—L.]

[² See letter from Dr. Parr, Book II. chap. vii. p. 155.—L.]

BOOK

I.

1803-11

informed me also that he (then residing in Norfolk) had visited at Heydon in my grandfather's lifetime; and he retained a lively impression of the 'Justice's' genial hospitality and general accomplishments.

Of the sons of this marriage two, Austin and Edward, went into the Church; two, William and John, into the army. John was remarkable for beauty, for good-nature, and for his attachment to the bottle. He is said to have captivated the Duchess of Rutland during the famous Irish viceroyalty of the convivial Duke; but he made some sad misalliance, and died young. Austin and Edward I saw; the first in knee-breeches and shovel hat. He was tall and stately, with an aquiline countenance of great majesty, and long flowing hair. When abroad in the shovel hat, he looked every inch a dignitary of the Church. At home, by the ingle nook, with his iron-gray locks, grand features, and gaunt, warrior-like frame, he realised my ideal of a Viking. Edward was a smart, short, lively man; with manners less provincial than Austin's, and a merry laugh. No two brothers could be more unlike in appearance; but they agreed, at least, in eccentricity of character and pride of temper.

My father, William Earle Bulwer, was the eldest of these sons. He was educated at North Walsham Grammar School,¹ and went up to the family college, Pembroke Hall, as a Fellow Commoner. When I was at Cambridge, an old barber named Wagstaffe asserted that he remembered him well as a gay, wild young gentleman, little given to Minerva; to Bacchus and to Venus much. It was more astonishing to hear that at Cambridge he was almost intimate with the great William Pitt;

[¹ North Walsham is only eleven miles from Heydon. Before the facilities for travelling which have made it easy for boys from every part of England to be gathered together at a few great schools, most country gentlemen were educated at the endowed Grammar Schools of their county. The North Walsham Grammar School, founded by Sir William Paston in the reign of James I., was in excellent repute in the boyhood of General Bulwer, and for many years later. Lord Nelson was a pupil there.—L.]

for, except that they were, both, of imperious character, and perhaps at that time may have had political notions in common, there was little enough between them to warrant the association of the sober and scholarly son of Chatham with the wild and fiery heir of the Norfolk Justice. But, as friendship is often produced by similar circumstances as well as by congenial pursuits, so the secret of their intimacy (if in truth it existed) may possibly be found in the fact that they were Fellow Commoners of the same College (in which Fellow Commoners were few), and under the same tutor, Dr. Pretyma; to whom they were both warmly attached.

My father, on leaving college, entered the army, and rose with some rapidity to the rank of Colonel. If attached to the fair sex, he was not less attached to his personal liberty. Though a very ambitious man, he could not be induced to a match that would indeed have tempted ambition, uncounteracted by other interests or passions. The Earl of — had two daughters, co-heiresses to princely fortunes; and, taking a liking to the rising young soldier, frankly offered him the hand and portion of one of these young ladies.¹ My father, who had much of the bluntness of a Norfolk man, refused point blank; nor did he ever in his later and wiser days give a better reason for this folly than that he was not satisfied with the shape of her ladyship's nose.

The fact, however, was that he had contracted a romantic, if illicit, attachment to a young person of great beauty, who eloped with him from a boarding-school in which she was teacher; and, though too haughty a man to marry beneath him, he had at least justice enough to say that, while she lived, he would never marry anyone else. The end of this poor

[¹ This was probably the Earl of Buckinghamshire, whose Blickling property (noted for its beautiful Jacobean house) joined the Bulwer estates in Norfolk. There were four coheirs, and the second daughter, Lady Suffield, born in 1769, inherited Blickling on the death of her father. It may be presumed that the object of Lord Buckinghamshire in proposing the marriage was to unite the two neighbouring estates. L.]

BOOK
I.

1803-11

young woman was tragical. She was killed by the kick of a horse.¹

In the meantime, while my father was pursuing his military career, and obeying the impulses of a very powerful, self-willed nature, wholly uncultivated by literature, but with that ability for action which takes lessons from life, a little delicate girl, with intelligent dark blue eyes—with shy, sensitive temper—passionately fond of poetry—deeply under the influences of religion—was growing up into woman.

I must open a new chapter. I am about to speak of my mother.

[¹ The catastrophe (my father told me) was caused by her eager affection. General Bulwer had built for her a villa in the neighbourhood of London; and as he was driving into the yard, on his return from some military duties which had detained him longer than usual, she ran out to meet him. It was in this hurried action that she received the kick from one of his horses, and died from the effects of the injury. - L.]



Richard Harborton Lytton



Elizabeth Goddell.



Elizabeth Barbara Lytton.

CHAPTER II.

(Autobiographical.)

MATERNAL GRANDFATHER AND GRANDMOTHER.

THE family from which my mother descended, and which she afterwards represented, was as ancient as that of my father, and had intermarried with houses famous in history. I shall have later to enter somewhat more into details on such venerable matter of pedigree; but at present I pause on the nearest branch of the tree, and content myself with brief mention of my mother's immediate parentage.

CHAP.
II.

Richard Warburton Lytton was among the most learned scholars of his time. He had been educated at Harrow under Dr. Parr; and the most intimate of his friends were Porter, afterwards known as the erudite Bishop of Cloyne, and the yet more eminent Sir William Jones: a modern *Mirandola*, whose marvellous comprehensiveness of intellectual acquirement Mr. Lytton almost rivalled, though without one effort at fame, and without one thought of the ambition which usually gives purpose and energy to the desire of knowledge.

In a letter I once received from Dr. Parr (who long survived his old friend and pupil), that unquestionable judge of sound learning says of Mr. Lytton—'He was the best Latin scholar of my time, inferior only to Porson in Greek, and to Sir William Jones in Hebrew and the Oriental languages.'

[¹ Samuel Parr (whom Macaulay, in his essay on Warren Hastings, calls the greatest scholar of his age) was born in 1747 at Harrow-on-the-Hill. He studied at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, 1765; left the University without

BOOK
I.

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He was also profoundly acquainted with the languages and literatures of Spain, Portugal, Italy, and France; and there were few of those departments of intellect which, once entered upon, usually concentrate the researches of a scholar's mind, such as History, Philology, Metaphysics, Theology, or the Positive Sciences, which he did not invade as a conqueror, though in none of them did he linger as a colonist.

At Oxford, which he entered as a gentleman commoner, I believe of Christ Church, it would appear, from some mention of him in the memoirs of his contemporary, Mr. Maurice, author of 'Indian Antiquities,' that his shyness and modesty in respect to the fair sex exposed him to the wit of his gayer friends. But, in return, his careless generosity attracted their affection; and the learning which was as ready to communicate its stores to a friend, as loth to obtrude them on the public, ensured him their respect.

Amongst his friends was Richard Paul Joddrell, a gentleman of fortune and family; known advantageously in his day as a considerable scholar in Greek, and not advantageously as the author of a very dull tragedy in English. With the sister of this gentleman, a young lady of sixteen, Mr. Lytton had the misfortune, at the age of two-and-twenty, to fall in love. By a still greater misfortune he married the object of his affections. He had come into possession of his estates on attaining his majority. The young couple took a house in Portman Square, then the most fashionable quarter; and entered into the gaiety of town life with the avidity of children. Now, as we all know, marriages where both parties are so young are

having taken any degree; was a master at Harrow School from 1767 to 1772; became in 1785 Perpetual Curate of Hatton in Warwickshire; and died, in 1825, at the age of eighty-eight. The *Bibliotheca Parriana*, 'a Catalogue of the Library of the late Reverend and Learned Samuel Parr, LL.D., Curate of Hatton, Prebendary of St. Paul's, &c.,' which was published in 1827, contains the following entry (p. 817), under the head of 'Philology and Foreign Miscellanies,'—'*Politiani (Angeli) omnia opera et alia quædam lectu digna. Folio. Venet. in æd. Aldi. 1498. Russia, gilt edges.* This beautiful copy of *Politian* was given to me by the learned Richard Warburton Lytton. S. P.—L.]

rarely happy. But in this instance I can conceive no marriage in which dissimilarity of disposition augured results less propitious.

For in my grandfather you must imagine, not only a devoted scholar, but, as such scholars often are, a complete infant in the ways of the world. With passions ardent, as his eager pursuit of knowledge made manifest, but hitherto animated only by the delight of that grave pursuit, he was now cast for the first time amidst the temptations of a metropolis. An orphan and an only child, he had no other guide in his household circle than a young lady fresh from the nursery, who had not married him for love, but at the bidding of her parents; and who was not only from the tenderness of her years unskilled to manage, but from the temper of her mind unable to comprehend, him. My grandmother Lytton never opened a book—except (in later life, at least) the Bible.* She held book-learning in utter contempt. She was extremely lively, and fond of all fashionable amusement. Common sense she had, and to a very high degree: a common sense that was shocked at every eccentricity, and could see only the most absolute folly in those whims which are the extravagancies of the wise. After sufficient discord and unhappiness for some few stormy years, this ill-assorted pair agreed, perhaps for the first time in their lives. They agreed to separate.¹ As the world

* Once, indeed, when I was a very little boy, I lent her the *History of Jane Shore*, a pamphlet popular with housemaids, and for which I paid sixpence. That was the only work in profane literature which I can remember having at any time seen her read. It made a great impression on her mind, and she talked of it and moralised on it to the end of her life.

[¹ Matrimonial felicity seems to have been a blessing unfamiliar to the Lyttons in all generations; and the family archives abound in curious records of conjugal disputes conducted with ceremonious regard to the domestic etiquette of former ages. The following quaint correspondence illustrates the relations between William Lytton (son of Sir Rowland) and his wife Mary, a daughter of Sir John Harrison of Balls.

Sir John Harrison to William Lytton.

Son Lytton,—I have hitherto forborne, as not willing to take notice of yo^r unhandsome usage of yo^r wife, hoping y^t in reasonable time you might be

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would judge, and perhaps correctly, all the essential faults were on the side of my grandfather Lytton. Nor have I ever heard his version of the story. Still, had the cause been judged by one so intimately acquainted with the peculiarities of the scholarly nature as the gentle compiler of the 'Calamities of Authors,' probably most of the husband's delinquencies would have found refining extenuation, if not absolute excuse. For my grandfather Lytton had in him a great deal of the temper of Martinus Scriblerus. The Ancients were never out of his head; and I have no doubt, judging by the worst anecdotes told of his proceedings, which are characterised by a certain infantine humour peculiar to the learned, that he fancied he was only imitating some classic orgy commemorated in Athenæus, when he was scandalising all the proprieties established by our prosaic countrymen as Dei Majores in the stately sanctuaries of Portman Square.

sensible of yo^r error. If her carriage towards you had at any time been mis-
beseeming her due respects to you, I should not have spared, but in downright
terms have reprehended her. But, since it hath so unhappily fallen out y^t
you have suffered yo^r fury to anticipate yo^r reason, & in a coach to draw yo^r
sword to affright not only yo^r wife but my Daughter Turner being great wth
childe; I cannot chuse but take notice thereof, & desire yo^r p^rsent company
here, to ye end we may discourse, & by Gods helpe quench & bury those bad
humours in due time, to make way to yo^r future happinesse, & go to take yo^r
wife home wth you, & not to provoke me to tell you that otherwise I must not
forget to be her father, to defend her innocencie, & in her distresse to performe
ye duty of a father; & so hoping to see you accordingly, I rest

Yo^r assured loving father

Balls : ye 3d October, 1668.

J. HARRISON.

Sir Rowland Lytton to Sir John Harrison.

S^r,—My Son, on ffriday last from ye roade, came immediately hither, to
give me an account what had happened there; & since by yo^r Letter now to
him, I perceive it hath been misrepresented to you, I will relate it as I had it
from my Son, & his Coachman who was there present. My Son first says he
entertained S^r Edmond Turner, his Lady & Company at his house wth all
civilities & respecte, and though he had some hints y^t ye Lady Turner intended
to carry him & his wife by force to Balls, yet he tooke it in jest and believed
they would never have attempted it, therefore resolved to wait on them part
of their way. When he came to Stevenage he offered to give them some wine, &
would have gone out wth his wife: ye Lady Turner commanded her Coachman
to drive on, threatening him by force to carry him to Balls, whether he would
or no; my Son being unwilling to make a bussell in ye town sat still, till he

If the fault, however, was on his side, so also was the sorrow. And, though I have said that he agreed to a separation, he, in truth, but reluctantly submitted to it. Nor that, without fierce wrestle first; followed by bitter, though not durable, resentment. Finally the alimony was settled, and the parchment signed. My grandmother removed to a small house in Upper Seymour Street, of which her mother, who was rich, made her a present. My grandfather took himself off, not to the old mansion of his forefathers in Hertfordshire (which was, indeed, at that time inhabited by the widow of his predecessor) nor to the residences in other counties which were comprised in the property he then possessed; but to some country village, where, obscure and unknown, he plunged once more into his natural element of Books. He had had enough of London and gay life. He never returned to the

had some way past it: then he cryed to ye Coachman to stand, ye Lady cryed drive on or else he should never drive her more; my Son then drew his sword, leaning out of ye Coach & struck at ye Coachman to make him stay: he then stayed: my Son went out of ye Coach & desired his wife to come out & goe into his: ye Lady comāding her Coachman again to goe on, & he attempting it, he drew his sword again, y^t he might have her Cleifs out before he went after this ye Coachman tooke his opportunities & drove a way carrying his wife in ye Coach; he called after her & desired she would not leave him; he being a foot wth out a horse & two horses only in his Coach, gave over ye pursuit. You may now judge of it, & my Son may doe what he pleases; but if any of my wife's ffriends should make me so ill a returne for an entertainment, they should never come more wth in my doors; & if my wife would goe from me contrary to my good likeing, I would never receive her again wth out a Submission. I am confident you know not how much my Son hath been a sufferer, & it would be now too tedious to enter into particulars, neither is it reasonable y^t he who hath received ye injury should seeke for an attonement. Therefore, if my Son waits not on you according to yo^r appoyntment, you will excuse him in it & me y^t I advise him to it, though I still am

Your respectfull servant, though unfortunate Brother

R. L.

The Lady Turners Nursery-maid did say at Diner before some Servants the day they went from Leachworth y^t her Lady intended to persuade my Son to goe part of ye way in ye Coach wth her, & then she would force him on: ye little Boy told my Son ye same in his Mothers hearing. As to any unhansome usage of his wife I am a Stranger, nor will I justifie him in any when I know it; abating some small errors, I hope he can justifie him selfe.

Knebworth, October ye 7th, 1668.—L.]

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last, and his visits to the first were rare and few. The Grecian Club was his great attraction to the metropolis; and there he formed an acquaintance with Dr. Johnson, of whom, in the catalogue of his library, I have found grateful and reverent mention.

The only fruit of this union was one girl—my mother, then in the first years of infancy. In order to adjust the rival claims of the parents, this poor child was not permitted to dwell with either. She was turned off, at the age of about five, to the then celebrated school called Blackland's; and very sad was her heart, and very long seemed her exile. After some time, she was allowed, first, to visit her mother; and then her father bore her away to his learned den. At her age it was natural that all her affections should be on the mother's side. And that mother, not from malice, but from the careless free-speaking common to a bold character and a womanly tongue, certainly prejudiced her against the rival parent. My grandfather saw this at a glance, and was chilled and soured. He had not those little artifices for the winning of a child's heart which suggest themselves naturally to persons conversant with the world; and, though a benevolent, generous man, his temper was warm, and his meaning was better than his judgment. Amongst the varieties of crotchet which he admitted into his mind were the democratic Republicanism which had then put forth its ominous bud, and the systems of education with which that peculiar kind of Republicanism was interwoven. To harden the children of the rich into the physical endurance of the children of the poor—to cram them with a learning that would revolt from coarse companionship, while fostering notions of equality with gingham and frieze—were fashionable articles in the creed which the imitators of Rousseau had set up for the improvement of the coming generation. Wherefore my grandfather sent out this little girl of delicate frame, and reared in the decorums of Blackland's school, to roll in the snow, and make respectful genuflexions to the under-gardener. He only

succeeded in weakening her constitution and revolting her pride. He committed, too, the common fault of the learned with the young—viz., of setting tasks beyond the growth of his pupil's mind, and was very indignant that she did not take readily to Latin. Perplexed by the unfavourable results of his theories, he set off one winter day to consult with one of his wise friends, a notable education-monger, and no less a person than Mr. Day, author of 'Sandford and Merton'—one of the most delightful of all books to read, but a somewhat dangerous production if taken (as meant by the author) for a model of educational ethics. My grandfather carried the little Elizabeth with him. They arrived late at night at the great author's residence. Elizabeth crossed the threshold with an awe which was not lessened by the first sight of the philosopher: a tall man, with a grave and precise face, much marked with the habits of authority and the ravages of the small-pox. But Mrs. Day, an excellent, homely woman (looking up to her lord as good wives should do) put the little girl at her ease, and softened the fear of fresh lectures in Latin by a judicious liberality of cakes and caresses.

The dread of Mr. Day wore off; and one well-advised compliment that he made to the frightened child probably did more to strengthen her courage and induce her application than all the aphorisms she had yet heard, and all the scoldings she had yet received. Mr. Day had put some grave book into her hands, and he found her, half an hour afterwards, despondently poring over it. 'Sir,' said Elizabeth, 'the book is beyond my understanding.'

'My child,' said the kind author, 'I have examined your mind already, and I tell you fairly there is no book beyond your understanding, if you will but resolve to try.'

Late in life, my poor mother still remembered that compliment, and was accustomed to repeat it with a kind of bashful pride—a something between a smile and a blush (for she blushed readily to the last)—whenever she thought that

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her sons, in their wisdom, were inclined to undervalue her prudent counsels. This visit, on the whole, did good to both teacher and pupil; and my mother was less sternly dealt with on her return to the austere Penates. And now, in a critical period of her life (for few periods are more critical than solitary and sorrowing childhood with those who comprehend it not, and whom it cannot comprehend), Heaven permitted the poor girl the solace and guidance of a female friend.

Near the small house in which, with the profound and stoical disdain of his wealth and station that my grandfather ever evinced after his separation—as if he considered them a part of his married life, and in parting with his wife got rid of the other burthens imposed upon the rich—near the small house in which, lined with books from cellar to garret, my grandfather lived—stood the stately and hospitable mansion of a gentleman who had been governor of one of our colonial possessions, and who was still, according to the fashion of that day, styled Governor F—. He had a daughter of about eighteen, extremely beautiful, the *belle* of the neighbourhood, and with every charm of mind and manner that could captivate the fancy, and warm the half-frozen heart, of the Scholar's daughter. Despite the difference of their years, this young lady attached herself warmly to the little Elizabeth; she comforted her in her griefs, supported her in her struggles, and gave her such excellent advice as served to reconcile her to her home, and to correct the impulses of childhood with a sense of the duties of life. Miss F. was not long afterwards married to Mr. Sherbrooke, to whom she was fondly attached. She went to reside in another county, and my mother saw her no more. A correspondence was maintained for a few years, but died away before my mother herself grew into a woman; nor was it renewed till the little Elizabeth had become a widow. She then was the first to invite it, and letters were interchanged till the death of the younger friend. For, alas! my mother died the first. Now, in this second correspondence

between two women then grown grey with years and trial, who had never met since the childhood of one and the maiden youth of the other, there is something to me singularly touching and pathetic. It showed how much of freshness of heart was still left to both. There was a sentiment in it, than which the romance of two schoolgirls is not more innocent and tender. I remember that my poor mother used a peculiar portfolio when she wrote to Mrs. Sherbrooke—a portfolio only taken out on those occasions; and the letters she received in return were hoarded in a certain bureau, in which she had preserved the favourite relics of her childhood. It was easy enough for them to have met again, had they desired it; but both shrank from such an interview. And once when, in some wondering ignorance of the human heart, I said, ‘What pleasure it would give you to see Mrs. Sherbrooke once more!’ ‘Ah! no,’ answered my mother, sighing. ‘At present she can but remember me as the child her kindness made happy, and I can only remember her as my ideal of youthful bloom and beauty. If we were to meet now we are old, how much of illusion on both sides would be destroyed!’ Thus they went on, never hinting at the idea of an interview, exchanging their little household confidences, mixed with simple criticisms on books, or womanly comments on the talk of the day, till on her death-bed my mother said to me sadly, ‘Answer Mrs. Sherbrooke’s last letter for me!’

The reader will pardon this long digression. I return to the childhood which Miss F——’s marriage to Mr. Sherbrooke left desolate and bereaved.

Shortly after this event, a change happened in my mother’s position with regard to her father, which contributed also to alter her own station in the world.

Though no one could, to all appearances, live more economically and simply than Mr. Lytton, it is astonishing what sums, to use the expression of his wife, ‘he continued to muddle away.’ How they went has always been a mystery in

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the family. The hoardings collected during his minority vanished. The estates were stripped of timber, enough to have paid off the mortgages of an earl; then the estate in Worcestershire was sold; next the estate in Bedfordshire. Reduced to his lands in Hertfordshire, my grandfather hastened to bring them also to the *ultima linea rerum*. Three manors, in the family since the reign of Henry VII., a Church living, some four or five of the farms most coveted by his neighbours, disappeared from my grandfather's Field Book. What might have become of the rest is a matter of facile conjecture, when the trustees of the marriage settlements happily took alarm; and, on investigating my grandfather's tenure, it appeared that he had been under a mistake in supposing himself possessed of the fee simple; that the estates were strictly entailed on my mother as the only child of his marriage; and that he had not, therefore, possessed the right to dispose of a single acre which had thus been 'muddled away.' A reference to the Court of Chancery soon decided this question; and a bill, if filed, would have summoned my grandfather to repay all the sums he had received. To have done this would have been his ruin, and he appealed at once to his child, whom that sum was intended to benefit. She contrived to suspend proceedings, and afterwards, when she came of age, resigned, for her own part, all such claims. To judge somewhat by the present value of what was sold, it was in itself a noble dowry that she thus resigned. My grandfather, in grateful return, settled upon my mother, not a very adequate compensation, but probably as much as, in his ignorance of affairs and incontinence of money, he thought he could spare during his own life; and he henceforth left it to her option to reside, as she pleased, with himself or her mother. She divided the year between them; and as for the allowance settled upon her, she handed it over to the poorer parent; saying simply, 'Mother, take it all, and spend as little as you can upon myself. I have no wants.'



A. F. and J. L. 1852

*Elizabeth Lytton and her mother.
from a picture at Knebworth.*

CHAPTER III.

(Autobiographical.)

THE CHILD OF PARTED PARENTS. 1790-1800.

CHAP.
III.

ELIZABETH found the house of her mother very different from that in which the unsocial and austere Scholar passed his days in objectless study. I have said that my grandmother had great common sense; she evinced it where common sense is most popularly appreciated—in the management of pecuniary affairs. She made a much greater show with her alimony than my grandfather did with his estates; kept three men-servants, when her lord was satisfied with one; two carriages, where Mr. Lytton in his rare excursions hired a fly; received hospitably; made it a point to be in the world every night except Sunday; and, after all, saved enough to bequeath a very handsome capital to the heir she selected;¹ while my grandfather, entertaining no one, rarely visiting anyone, and without one visible hobby from which to scatter his gold, barely left enough personal property to cover his modest debts. Well may we exclaim—

No Deity is present where Prudence is absent.

Mrs. Lytton was still young, and not without some beauty. She was small, but well-shaped; and, when I remember her, in age, had a certain air of fashion, and an imposing way of entering a room. She had dark, lovely eyes, a handsome profile, an indifferent mouth, but good teeth, a sprightly laugh, much small talk and social animation, and was pas-

[¹ Her second grandson, Lord Dalling.—L.]

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sionately fond of cards; a taste that is almost the only thing I can say I inherit from my grandmother. The tone of society seems to have been more joyous and adventurous at that time than it is now. It was the time of Ranelagh and masked balls. The London season was ended with the birthday; and the votaries of pleasure, unsated with gaieties so soon over, scattered themselves eagerly among the different watering-places, where they enjoyed at once the air and verdure of the country, the amusements and crowd of the town. But the young Elizabeth was as lonely in my grandmother's gay, card-playing, set as she had been in the retreat of her learned sire. As she grew up, the sorrows of her childhood impressed her character with melancholy. Long commune with her own heart had served to invigorate her understanding, and to give a tinge of romance to her affections. Nor could she, with abilities of an uncommon order, and habits of thought at once shrinking and refined, have lived with a man who, however severe in manner, was so accomplished in intellect as Mr. Lytton, without finding a sad vacuity of talk amongst the ladies and gentlemen of that society which was congenial to the sprightly fair one who despised books and adored quadrille. The young heiress, too, began to feel the sense of her station; the more, perhaps, that both her parents were indifferent to it, and that the world was not apt to recognise it, either in the drawing-rooms of Upper Seymour Street, or in the obscure village selected by her father for his abode. Then, those Muses which had seemed so unalluring to her childhood took a softer aspect, and became the consolers of her youth. Thrown on the resources of her own mind, she strove to increase their stores; she never, indeed, acquired much learning. And this was rather from an excellence in her nature than a defect in her understanding; for she was in all things pre-eminently feminine; and the learned ladies of that day, whom my poor grandfather held up to her as an example, made themselves so absurd by their pretensions and presump-

tion, that my mother conceived a great horror of a *bas bleu*—as of a being who, without conquering the province of men, entirely renounced the appanages of women. But, if she did not acquire learning, Elizabeth had far more reading than the young ladies of that time ordinarily possessed. She taught herself French and Italian; and, though she did not speak even the former language with facility, she had a competent acquaintance with the most elegant literature in both. To such literary attainments she added the accomplishments of her sex. She drew and painted with delicacy and a natural sentiment, which, under better instruction than she received, might have ranked her high amongst amateur artists.¹ In

[¹ Curious testimony to her proficiency in this accomplishment is afforded by the following old-fashioned verses, addressed to her when she was fifteen years of age.

To my blue-eyed maid.

Were India's various wealth
To crown my wishes laid,
I'd all contemn,
Both gold and gem,
Without my blue-eyed maid.

The pride of pomp and power
How gladly I'd resign,
Content to wait
And serve, if fate
At last would make her mine!

I write, and she can paint.
We'd lend each other aid.
The Muse, my friend,
Should never end
To praise the blue-eyed maid.

Her pencil, then, might show
(Since it such art hath caught)
What words at best
Leave unexpressed,
My spirit's inmost thought.

And when this spirit fleets
Dissolved in airy shade,
To worlds above
'Twill bear a love
Pure as my blue-eyed maid.

Many of her drawings in chalk and water-colour are still preserved at Knebworth. The handling of them is masculine in its vigour and precision.—L.]

BOOK

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music her success was less decided. Her mother was a notable performer; and Elizabeth was one of those few whom, from invincible modesty, emulation does not excite but discourage. She could make her own way if left unobserved and silent; but if you placed before her a rival, she shrank back from the contest. Her favourite instrument was the guitar, for that her mother did not play. To these arts she added the one which the heart whispers to genius in youth—Poetry. Her verses might not have charmed the world, but they set her own thoughts and dreams to a music that might justly please herself. And in certain little manuscript books, treasured by me beyond all family archives, still the fine delicate Italian hand records, from early childhood to advanced age, the unknown confession of gentle thoughts and sinless griefs; the progress of a pure, sensitive, noble, and ill-comprehended spirit through the Vale of Shadow.¹

My grandfather now suddenly made overtures of reconciliation to his wife. The widow who had occupied the family seat of Knebworth was no more. The home of his ancestors was vacant. And then, perhaps, visions of some nobler and more useful life began to disturb the lethargic quiet of the solitary Scholar. At all events, he took that occasion to proffer his home, and to promise amendment, to the mother of his child.

My grandmother was so essentially a London woman that to her the dignified gloom of an old manorial pile, far from the

[¹ A little volume of her poems was printed (privately) in 1826. Some of them were written in 1800, when she was twenty-six, but the others between the ages of fourteen and seventeen. Of the earlier verses the following is a specimen :—

^c
 Short is our longest day of life,
 And soon its prospects end :
 Yet on that day's uncertain date
 Eternities depend.
 So equal to our being's aim
 The scope to virtue given ;
 And every minute saved from Earth
 Begins an age in Heaven.

Anno ætatis 17.—[L.]

charms of quadrille and casino, probably presented anything but allurements. She was also a woman of that high spirit which fully enjoys the blessings of liberty and independence. She drove, with her own fair hands (I mention this as emblematic of her whole character), a tall phaeton and pair; and in this equipage transported herself, as she listed, from London to Bath, and from Bath to London. So great was her confidence in herself, that one dark evening, having to return from some excursion across Hounslow Heath—at that time infested by highwaymen—she laughed to scorn the warnings, she received on the road and the terrors of her two men-servants, and in the very centre of the heath was stopped by three foot-pads. She held one a moment in parley, and threw him off his guard, flicked the other in the eye, drove gallantly over the third, and arrived in London with spirits sufficiently composed to dress for a party, and relate her adventure, in illustration of the truth that a woman with her wits about her, and the whip-hand disengaged, is a match for three men any day in the year.

My grandmother still naturally desired to keep the whip-hand disengaged.

A correspondence between the parties took place. On my grandfather's side the letters seem struck from a heart still sore and bleeding; they are not without a dignity of their own—a dignity of sorrow. Had his wife loved him, they had been eloquent; but as his wife loved him not, they were inartificial and ill adapted to the occasion.¹ On the other hand, my

[¹ *Ex una disce omnes.*

Richard Warburton Lytton to his Wife.

Blackheath: 12 November, 1789.

Madam,—Permit me to return you thanks for granting my request of a personal conference. I consider it as a favour, and hope you will not find me ungrateful. Before that event happens, and before the favour of your intended letter to me, give me leave to state a few circumstances which you may find of some use in the course of this business. Our present state is real destruction to our dear child. Therefore, of course, we should both wish some alteration

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grandmother's letters are perfect models of propriety under circumstances so painful. They begin "Sir" and end "Your most obedient Servant." They do not contain a single reproach, nor descend to one womanly complaint; on the contrary, they express a sense of the honour proposed, in language the most appropriately polite. The fact is that, on his side, the Scholar wrote without consulting a friend. On the other side, every sentence in the letters of the lady was composed by one of her brothers, Mr. Henry Jodrell, an exceedingly sensible man, who had studied at the Bar, was now a Member of Parliament, and who, from the moment he had exchanged long clothes for short, had never been known to get himself into a scrape. He lived honoured, and died wealthy. Written negotiations proving unsatisfactory, my grandfather, probably suspecting that periods so polished, and arguments so precise, never came from the hand more familiar with the card than the pen, pleaded hard for a personal interview. After much demur, the consulting brother gave it as his opinion that my

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in it. I think you will agree with me that, were it possible for us to live comfortably together, that would be the best thing for our daughter. You do me the favour to speak well of me. You chiefly allege difference of disposition. Hear me. Wherever that difference arises from peculiarity of temper only, I promise you to use every endeavour to subdue it, and I doubt not but you would do the same. We are, I believe, both altered in the most discordant parts of our disposition. Let me beg of you above all things to come with as little prejudice as possible to this conference. Only hear me patiently. Give me a chance of success, and do not come predetermined against me. That will be cruel and unjust. You are very dutiful and affectionate to your mother, very tender and affectionate to your daughter. Treat me with humanity. The present situation of things, and their inevitable consequences, are so dreadful that I can no longer bear them. I entreat you by the love you bear your child, and by everything valuable to you, do not come resolved to adhere to former purposes. It will be the ruin of all three. I assure you there is nothing would make me so happy as to win your affections, and I would do more for that purpose than for all the riches and honours of the world. Do not oppress a heart made up of sensibility. Oh do not totally ruin the peace of one who would go through anything to secure yours. Remember that the present opportunity will be decisive, and that the most important consequences are suspended on your conduct. I shall await with anxiety the favour of your letter; and I am, with every wish for your happiness,

Your much obliged

RICHARD W. LYTTON.—L.]

grandmother could not, with propriety, refuse this request. But to guard against all indiscretion, and not to infringe on the deed of separation, he declared that the interview must take place in the presence of witnesses. My grandfather had no option but to submit. Man and wife met under the chilling and vigilant eyes of Lord Hawke and Mr. H. Jodrell, two most gentlemanlike men. The poor Scholar, always so shy, had not a word to say for himself. My grandmother repeated the substance of her letters, which she had committed to memory, and Mr. H. Jodrell followed on the same side, with much proper feeling and great parliamentary tact. My grandfather hemmed and stammered, looked at his wife despairingly, caught at his hat, bowed, and withdrew. But the great house wanted a mistress, and the large heart a companion. So, a few years later, my grandfather sent for his only child.

CHAPTER IV.

(Autobiographical.)

KNEBWORTH. 1789-1812.

BOOK
I.

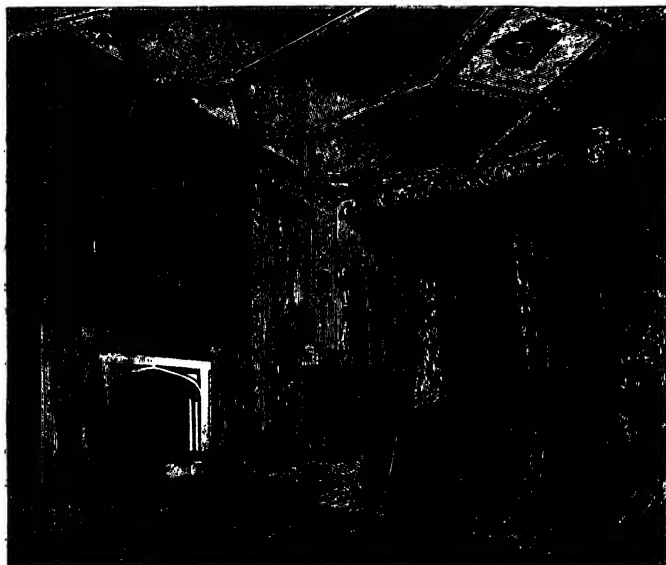
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THERE is a description of Knebworth in two old numbers of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, which conveys a tolerable notion of what it was at that time, though, perhaps, the writer failed to seize what may be called the poetry of the place. It was a large irregular building in the form of a quadrangle, resembling the entrance court of Knowle. The front to the east was the most ancient part, and was traditionally said to have existed as far back as the reign of Edward III. Its façade, however, had been altered long after that date. It consisted of two tall square towers, backed by a lofty watch-turret, with a deep gateway in the centre, and two wings that contained apartments known by the name of 'The Haunted Chambers.' The side to the north was occupied by a long gallery, built over a colonnade; that to the south by a gigantic range of offices and dormitories, suited to an age in which the owner lodged his retainers. The fourth side, to the west, still remaining, was said to be built, during the reign of Henry VII., by Sir Robert de Lytton, a warrior and statesman in high favour with that monarch, who conferred on him the rank of Privy Councillor and Knight of the Bath, and the offices of Treasurer of the Household and Keeper of the Great Wardrobe.

The place was memorable for other associations than those of the family to which it had passed. It had belonged

to the great Norman Chief whose rude name and designation are latinized into Eudo Dapifer, subsequently to Thomas Plantagenet de Brotherton, Earl of Norfolk, and after him to that paladin of English chivalry, Sir Walter Manny.

In the time of Sir Rowland Lytton, who, in Anne, daughter of Oliver St. John, first Lord of Bletsoe, married the kinswoman of Elizabeth, and who was himself Captain of the band of Gentlemen Pensioners, which comprised the flower



QUEEN ELIZABETH'S ROOM, KNEBWORTH.

of the English nobles, Lieutenant for Essex and Herts, and Commander of the Forces of these counties at Tilbury, it had been honoured with the visits of the Virgin Queen,¹ and, in the reign of Charles I., Sir William Lytton, member for the county, and a sincere though moderate patriot, had received Hampden, Eliot, and Pym in its halls, to consult on

[¹ The bedroom, said to have been occupied by Queen Elizabeth on those occasions, has survived the demolition, by my grandmother, of a great part of the house in 1812. An illustration of it is given above.—L.]

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the measures to be adopted at the commencement of the Long Parliament.

The character of the house was in accordance with such associations, and was in itself a romance. The long gallery was covered with faded portraits; the chambers bristled with gloomy arras. The antlers of stags, so vast that their genus seems to have vanished from our parks and forests, like things before the Ark, were ranged below the grim gothic masks that served as corbels to the beams of the lofty ceiling that domed the desolate banquet-hall. Trap-doors and hiding-places, and a kind of oubliette called 'Hell-hole,' presented themselves to the terrified respect of the young poetess.

[The aspect and associations of the place here described by my father, as he first saw it in his childhood, powerfully and permanently influenced his whole character. To be, in some way, instrumental to the revival of its fallen fortunes was the constant object of his life. In a letter, written not long after his first successes in authorship, he thus recalls the feelings with which he had wandered, when a boy, amongst its fresh woodlands and faded galleries.

Hitherto, except during rare and brief excursions, my childhood had been passed in London. My brothers were at school. I had no companions of my own age, and my rural recreations were confined to the bare, brown, rugged fields that then stretched towards Primrose Hill, innocent of the plaister palaces of the Regent's Park, and the architectural *villainies* of Mr. Nash. But now. . . . Oh to breathe the air of the *real* country! to tread on turf where I might so easily imagine that

A gentle knight was pricking o'er the plain!

to find in dells and copses fitting scenes for the spells of Archimago or the feats of Amadis;—that was better than to read, it was to *live*, romance! You who were bred up in a town, have you ever forgotten, will you ever forget, your first escape into the country? Was it not happy? Did the days then ever seem long enough? Did you care for human companions so long as you had an old tree to climb, or a green turf to roll on? And, if you had a dog for your playfellow,

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your confidant, your friend, was not his love something that makes your flesh creep, and your heart stand still, when you think of the human confidants and friends you have had since? I think it is wrong to let children have dogs. It spoils them for mankind. But was it not happy, that first noviciate of the country? When you go into the country now, do you find it the same thing? I do not. The country is a child's natural world, as a man's, perhaps, is the city. How vividly I still remember that day when we drove, towards evening, along the melancholy, neglected park, and the old



BANQUET HALL, KNEBWORTH.

house rose for the first time upon my view! My grandfather had not lived there for many years. It was a large quadrangle, with a gothic archway flanked by huge square towers, and backed by a tall watch-turret, leading into a gloomy courtyard with a cloister on one side. This pile, which Sir Walter Scott, I have heard, more than once paused to examine when he was on his way to the North, was of no architecture, or rather it was of all architectures. Uncouth, heavy, sombre, dismantled, half decayed. It was of various dates, from about the time of Henry VI. or Richard III. (the gateway still more ancient) to Charles I. It was unsuitable to modern

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comforts, and also, from its immense size, to the costliness of modern establishments. It was very much too large to be maintained out of the diminished revenues of the land still left to it. And so my mother demolished a great portion of it, and remodelled the rest. Meanwhile, during these alterations, we lived in a little Manor House at the outskirts of the park. But still it was permitted to explore (while the axe struck, and the hammer sounded) the strange recesses of that old, half-feudal, pile. I remember especially a long narrow gallery adjoining the great drawing-room (and hung with faded and grim portraits) which terminated in rooms that were called 'haunted.' They were of great antiquity, covered with gloomy tapestry, and containing huge high chimney-pieces with rude reliefs set in oak frames grotesquely carved. In another room adjoining these, and belonging to one of the square towers of the gateway, was a curious trap-door that gave access to a chamber beneath it—if chamber it can be called, which had neither doors nor windows. This place seemed constructed for no earthly object, either of habitation or convenience. Sir William Lytton, who was member for Hertfordshire during the Civil War, and one of the Commissioners sent to treat with King Charles at Oxford, had, like an honest gentleman, resisted the subsequent usurpation of Cromwell, and received the honour of being one of the Protector's prisoners in Hell-hole. From a recollection, no doubt, of that adventure, he had christened this mysterious chamber by the same euphonious name. How could I help writing romances when I had walked, trembling at my own footstep, through that long gallery, with its ghostly portraits, mused in those tapestry chambers, and peeped, with bristling hair, into the shadowy abysses of Hell-hole?

The 'haunted rooms' mentioned in this letter were pulled down in 1812;¹ but are still remembered with mingled awe and pride by a few aged inhabitants of Knebworth village.

[¹ To such venerable features of the place as have survived that event, and to its surrounding aspects, which are unchanged, my father's early letters make frequent allusion. And, even before the essay on it republished in *The Student*, Knebworth was the theme of some boyish verses written by him when he was fifteen, and published in 1820 in a little volume called *Ismael and other Poems*. These verses, beginning, in the prescribed style—

'Hail, lofty domes, hail, venerable place,
The noble dwelling of a nobler race!'

lament the change

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They are minutely described in a little story called 'Jenny Spinner; or, the Ghost of Knebworth House.' This story, written in singularly pure English, with a lively simplicity of style, has never, I believe, been published; but there are a few printed copies of it at Knebworth, and a short criticism on it written by my father, after the death of his mother, led to his acquaintance with its authoress, a Miss James, who was then in her eighty-fifth year. 'She was,' he says, 'very original, a thorough gentlewoman, well informed and amusing.' Their correspondence was only ended by her death. In it, she calls herself 'a lively octogenarian;' and one of her letters to another correspondent, who has favoured me with a copy of it, thus describes the circumstances in which 'Jenny Spinner' was written:—'We were a merry Christmas party at Knebworth about 1800. Among other subjects of amusing talk was *the ghost*. We could get no information from the aged gate-keeper, or any other old person in the village, except that a ghost there certainly *was*. Our amiable host proposed that we should try our hands in writing a story about the ghost, since it could not be got to tell us its own story; and I determined to make up one as unlike what was expected of me as possible. The only interesting fact about it is that it was written on the spot, and that the old Knebworth House is most truthfully described in it.' At this time the house was let to a newly married gentleman, whose young wife, says the authoress of 'Jenny Spinner,' 'was troubled about the old

'from those old feudal hours
When minstrels' music echoed through thy towers;'

describe how

•
'The drooping dryads of the lone domain
In cold neglect bewail'd their ruin'd reign,
Where long the velvet moss and violet blue
In wild luxuriance o'er the pavements grew,'

until

•
'arose the last of all her race
Who join'd each power her native house to grace.'

And they conclude by a benediction on 'the loved possessor,' his mother.—L.]

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pictures and furniture that encumbered a drawing-room she wished to make more cheerful-looking. Now it happened that frequent visits to Wilton and Long Leat had inspired me with great fondness and respect for old pictures. So I proposed that all the family and other pictures throughout the house should be collected together and placed in the long gallery that occupied one side of the quadrangle round which the mansion was built. My friend gladly embraced my proposal, and the pictures were brought there under my superintendence. I well remember some of them. Two of Lord Strafford and his mother, both of them perhaps originals; one of Lord Falk, a whole length; and four ladies, sisters, I think, all of the Lytton family. When, long afterwards, I first saw Mr. Bulwer, I was impelled to ask who he was: his peculiar delicacy of feature and complexion so vividly recalled those portraits to my recollection.' And, in a letter to my father, she says: 'I had only seen you twice in my life. Once, when you were a fair-haired, blue-eyed, delicate-complexioned little boy of four years old; and once again (the only time I had seen you since, and it was but a passing glance) at Warwick House. Yet then I recognised you at once by your likeness to the lady portraits at Knebworth. And instinct also helped me, I suppose.'

The last years of this clever and amiable old lady were passed at Bath; where she died at a very advanced age, retaining to the last all the vivacity of a bright, sensible, active spirit, and surviving her long-lived neighbour, Walter Savage Landor; to whose orphan nieces she was warmly attached.]

CHAPTER V.
(*Autobiographical.*)

THE LYTTONS.

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V.

By degrees, as she became habituated to the house, my mother's fancy delighted in peopling its halls with their past inhabitants. While my grandfather was employed in the only elaborate composition he ever achieved (whereof more hereafter), Elizabeth collected legend and ghost-tale; and contracted intimate friendship with her ancestors, through the medium of their dusky portraits, and the yellow pedigrees and papers which mouldered in 'The Muniment Room.' She accompanied Sir Giles, or Egideo, to the holy wars and the siege of Askalon, with her kinsman, the great Constable of Chester; or followed with the first Sir Robert the devious fortunes of the Lancastrian Duke and his mysterious, witchlike, wife; saw the second Sir Robert beside Henry of Richmond, with 'the sparkling eyes and the glittering hair,' when the princely adventurer waited the despairing charge of the last Plantagenet; or welcomed, with the handsome Sir Rowland, who, in his gilded armour and with his lance of tourney, looked from the walls 'severe in youthful beauty,' the visit of the manlike Tudor. Most of the ancient wealth of this knightly race was gone. It had at one time possessed wide lands and fair manors in twelve counties, great property in London, besides 'a fayre mansion with vamures'¹ in the once polished Quartier of the

[¹ 'Vamure' (also called 'alure'): the walk or gangway on the top of a wall behind the parapet; which afforded a suitable place for the ladies when

BOOK I.
1803-11 'Fleyte.' About the time of Elizabeth it reached its apex of prosperity; but from that date came a great disproportion of daughters as compared with sons, and each daughter carried off an estate.

At length, in the reign of William III., the male line came to a positive close. And the last male, Sir William, bequeathed so much of his property as escaped the *auri sacra fames* of some four or five daughters, to the son of the eldest, who had married Sir George Strode. That young gentleman married a daughter of the House of Mostyn of Mostyn; and, dying without issue, left in turn his estates to his cousin, and dearest friend, William Robinson Lytton. As this gentleman was my mother's great-grandfather, and the one from whose will she derived her inheritance, and as from his race

martial exercises were exhibited in the courtyard beneath. 'A goodly mount, with towers and vauures al gilt, with al things necessary for a fortress.'—*Hall's Chronicle*. *Parker's Glossary of Architecture*, 5th edition.—L.]

[Of the territorial connection of the Lyttons with Derbyshire, local evidence survives in the village (almost a little town) of Lytton, now spelt Litton, about seven miles from Buxton; where it is said to have been a place of some importance in the days of the old miners' guilds. Not far beyond Millersdale the Derbyshire Wye widens from a narrow stream into a broad expanse of water, surrounded by high rocky banks. On one of these (about a mile or more from the village of Litton) still stands Lytton, or Litton, Mill. It was lately destroyed by fire, but has been rebuilt; less picturesquely, if one may judge from old pictures of the place as it was fifty years ago. Of the neighbouring and ancient church of Tydswell, the Lytton chapel was formerly a feature shown to visitors and noticed in guide-books. This chapel, however, has perished or been removed in the recent restoration of the church; where the only visible memorial left of the Lyttons is an old brass upon the pavement of the south transept, still bearing the effigies of Robert Lytton and his wife (*temp.* 1483). In the seventh year of the reign of Henry VII., Sir Robert Lytton purchased from Sir Thomas Bouchier the manor and estate of Knebworth; and, in the pleadings of a suit brought in 1723 by William Robinson Lytton against Sir John Statham, it is set forth by 'your orator' that 'in the reign of her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth' George Alsoppe of Tutbury purchased from Rowland Lytton, of Knebworth, the manor and estate of Lytton in the county of Derby, under covenant that 'he, the said George Alsoppe, his heirs and assigns, &c., should yearly forever thereafter pay and deliver, or cause to be paid and delivered, to the said Rowland Lytton, his heirs and assigns, &c., one pair of new gilt spurs fit to be worn on the feast day of St. John the Baptist, commonly called Midsummer Day, or within twenty days next after the said feast, at the south porch of the parish church of Knebworth aforesaid.'—L.]

she was lineally descended (while, except by very early alliances, she was only collaterally connected with the direct stock of the Lyttons), I must be pardoned some mention of his claims to her family pride. Sir William Norreys, a member of the powerful baronial house of that name, was settled in Wales at the close of the fourteenth century. He married the sister of Owen Tudor, grand-aunt to King Henry VII. Robert, the son of this Sir William, who espoused the daughter of Gryffyth, chamberlain of Wales, was a knight of so high repute that his son was popularly known by the patronymic of Rob's, or Robin's, son. According to the custom of those parts, the name thus given in honour stuck to the descendants. For a few generations they were known indiscriminately by the names of Norreys and Robinson; and, indeed, to a late period they are named Robinson *ceu* Norreys in deeds. But gradually the custom of the country prevailed over the rights of the original cognomen, and the Robinson survived the Norreys. This family, which possessed considerable property in Wales and elsewhere, intermarried with the chief Norman houses settled in the Palatinate, such as Malpas of Brereton, Warburton of Bodely, the Grosvenors of Eaton, and the Stanleys of Hooton. They brought into the scutcheon of the Lyttons no less than a hundred quarterings; and, through their Cymrian alliances, claimed descent from the darlings of the Esteffod—Roderic Mawr, Caradoc Vreichfeas Gryffyth, King of North Wales; mounting, in that line, to Cadwallader the sainted, last of the kings of Britain.

An intimacy had existed from time immemorial between this family and the Lyttons, who had formerly possessed lands in Cheshire. It was cemented by various connections. But, at the time of the Civil Wars, the head of the Lyttons embraced the party graced by the genius of Hampden, and the Colonel Robinson *ceu* Norreys of Guersylt was an enthusiastic and distinguished Cavalier. An anecdote of this latter gentleman, told, I think, in 'The History of Denbighshire,' and

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more at length in family records, is sufficiently interesting to be worth repeating. He had contributed to Charles's short-lived victory at Rowton Heath, and joined the battle of Marston Moor. He was pursued hard by the Roundheads; and, in doubling from their chase, came in front of his own mansion. Some workmen were employed there, upon alterations of the grounds, or house. The Cavalier dismounted from his horse, which was carried away and concealed, borrowed the dress of one of the labourers, and set to work with the rest. The Roundheads came up; and, after searching in vain the house and premises, addressed the workmen; informed them that a considerable sum was set on the head of the Malignant, and offered a tempting bribe for any clue to his detection. To the honour of these poor men be it said, not a word of betrayal escaped from one of them. 'It is well for your master,' said the grim captain of the Parliamentary troop, 'that we did not find him, or we would have hung him up before his own door.'

They rode off discomfited, and the Colonel escaped. He got over the seas, and joined the small knot of exiled gentry that composed the Court of Charles II. On his return, at the Restoration, the Roundhead to whom the estate had been allotted, and who had made considerable embellishments and improvements in the mansion, restored the property to him on very moderate terms.

The differences between the two families, thus enlisted on opposite sides, were ultimately reconciled by a new alliance, followed in a later generation by the friendship of the cousins to which I have before adverted.

I have often thought that a very interesting and instructive work might be compiled, having for its object the history of a private family, as a companion to the history of our kings. Papers, title-deeds and household documents, old wills, inventories of furniture, house accounts and estate books, might help, with the more general chronicle of the progress of manners, to form a complete record of all those important

minutiæ in the life of a nation which even the research and vivifying genius of a Macaulay cannot wholly comprehend in the annals of its public events. Such a work might have the interest of romance and the reality of fact. I imagine I could compile such a work from the imperfect *Collectanea Biographica* of my own ancestry.¹ And one notable and entertaining crisis in such a record would be the accession of this new dynasty of Robinson Lytton. Their predecessors of Knebworth had been a stately and decorous race, attached to public affairs, and from father to son knights of the shire. These descendants of the old Cavalier were gay, spendthrift, idle roysterers. Happily, they lasted only two generations. There they stand amidst the family portraits, beside the mail and fardingales of the earlier owners of Knebworth, rustling in the bravery of velvets, green and crimson. Even in shooting attire, the first of the dynasty has his frock all garnished with gold lace, and his trim hose rolled fashionably over his knees. Even in childhood, at the age apparently of ten, the second of that line carries his hat debonairly under his arm, wears his court-sword by his side, and his face (blooming with all roses, York and Lancastrian) smiles on posterity from under the curls of a powdered periwig; while the mother sits in state by a flowing stream, from which her daughters, in full dress, are decoying 'the silver-scaled prey;' with her snuff-box *à la Régence* open in her hand, and on the knee of her satin robe a madrigal commencing with the pastoral verse—

Blow winds, blow, and bear me to some grove.

They flourished through the reigns of George I. and George II., these Robinson Lyttons; and the fine house they bought in town, and the fine furniture they put into it, and the

[¹ The humorous sketch of the Viponts was probably suggested by this idea of a Family regarded as a continuous entity which, like a nation, preserves its typical character under the varying conditions of successive generations, and may, as such, be historically described. A reflex of the same idea appears in the family portrait of the earlier Chillinglies.—L.]

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dances and masques they gave, and the money they threw away upon singers and fiddlers (they were very musical, as your Cymrians mostly affect to be), are they not written still in the catalogues and house-steward's books, which furnish the materials of their short and flourishing reign? In Parliamentary politics they meddled not overmuch; neither father nor son took his place among the Commons. But this was owing, perhaps, to their discontent with things existing; they did not condescend to acknowledge their Germanised masters on the throne; they were still true to the faith of the Cavalier. The old spirit broke out when Charles Edward crossed the borders. Then, William Robinson Lytton buckled on the sword of his fathers, and his horse stood saddled in the stall. His wife (the lady with the snuff-box—a woman of sense and spirit), finding that all her remonstrances were in vain, pretended to yield, and accompanied her husband to the stables on pretence of seeing him depart; but no sooner had he entered, in order to see, himself, to his horse—for the peasants of that neighbourhood were not to be trusted like the old Welshmen of Guersylt—than the prudent lady turned the key in the door, and fairly locked him in. There, to his inconceivable rage, was the impatient Jacobite imprisoned for two days—food and wine silently lowered to him from the loft—till news came of the retreat of the Stuart from Derby, and the final destruction of all reasonable hope for his cause. The prisoner was then released; and if he did not thank his wife for preserving, perhaps, his head, and certainly his property, the debt of gratitude due to her has been amply paid by the blessings of her posterity. •

The son of this gentleman died without issue; and the estates, again passing through the female line, came to my grandfather, the only son of the eldest sister, who had married an officer in the army—of a younger branch of the Warburtons of Ardley (settled in the Queen's County, Ireland)—and closed their entail with my mother, as his child. Meanwhile,

the male line of the family of Norreys of Guersylt (continued through the elder son) came also to an untimely end. The last male of that race was drowned in escaping from Anglesea one dark night, and his death, commemorated by a very mournful air of some Welsh bard's, left my mother ultimately the sole representative of that House, as she was of the Lyttons.

In going through the above details of private history, I am no doubt indulging my acknowledged infirmity of family pride, and, it may be, exposing myself to the contempt of the philosophical. But I am also faithfully tracing the origin of influences which swayed the character of my mother, and, inherited from her, have had a direct effect upon my own moral nature and literary productions. For, as may readily be conceived, a girl at the age of eighteen, with tendencies at once poetical and reverential, could scarcely fail in this first introduction to the seat of her ancestors, and the memorials of their history, to contract those thoughts which invest with a kind of piety the images of the silent Lares. And such thoughts, made a permanent part of the mind by an earnest character, tenacious of its impressions, would no less naturally colour the earliest lessons bestowed upon her children.

With her, however, family pride assumed its most in-offensive and ennobling attributes. It left her proud amongst the great, never to the humble. And her sympathy with all energetic and generous action was so strong, that she had, in spite of her respect for gentle blood, a still greater admiration for all who rose by their own deeds and talents.

CHAPTER VI.

(Autobiographical.)

FIRST SUITORS. 1789.

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WHILE my mother was thus engaged, my grandfather proceeded with his great work. Imagine what it was! But that is impossible. In the first place, it was a drama. There seems nothing remarkable in that. Yes, but do not fancy that he deigned, like his unworthy grandson, to write dramas in vulgar English. It was a drama in Hebrew; and, what is more, it was intended for the stage. It is said that he afterwards burned this work in despair, when complaining to a friend that he could not find Jews sufficiently versed in Hebrew to act it. The friend pertinently observed, 'And if you did, where on earth will you find an audience sufficiently versed in Hebrew to understand it?' At all events, the work was not forthcoming amongst the Scholar's MSS. Even its title is lost. Ichabod! Ichabod!

Amongst the country neighbours of the new occupier of Knebworth was Mr. George Bowes, a younger brother of the Earl of Strathmore. He was a tall man with a long chin, and drove a curricule, in which he declared it to be the dream of his ambition to have Miss Lytton by his side. He possessed some property that nearly adjoined my grandfather's, and a very pretty old-fashioned place, with green alleys, bosquets, and statues. Lord and Lady Hawke were now on a visit at Knebworth—the latter an affected personage, who had written a very fantastic novel. She soon busied herself in endeavouring to make up a match between Mr. Bowes and

Elizabeth. She seems to have talked Mr. Bowes into her own views, and my grandfather smiled, nodded, and thought of his Hebrew drama, while her ladyship represented to him the advantages of joining the two properties, and the possibilities of Mr. Bowes succeeding to the Earldom of Strathmore. But Elizabeth, with her head full of knights and barons, Plantagenets and rulers, was still too much in love with her ancestors to spare any romance for her contemporaries.

A little time after this, her heart was in more danger. There came to the old hall a gay, handsome, dashing young Irishman, of the age in which men perhaps are most fascinating to young ladies of eighteen, viz. about thirty. He was in a fashionable regiment; he had the manners of good society, and the gallant liveliness of his nation. He easily propitiated my grandfather's favour. Mr. Lytton had known his family well, and perhaps had an *arrière-pensée* in the invitation that brought him into Hertfordshire. My grandfather let him know, in answer to some frank hints, that he had but to win the consent of Miss Lytton, in order to secure his own. So Miss Lytton now rode out with this cavalier, through the green lanes, in the soft summer evenings. And the cavalier rode so well! In her old age she still considered this gentleman the type of elegance in dress and manner, and thought our generation sadly changed for the worse. The powdered locks; the double-breasted white waistcoat, with the muslin cravat in great bows, rising over a delicate pink silk kerchief, carelessly folded to answer the purpose of our modern under-vest; the top-boots, shrunk halfway down the calf, and the broad-brimmed hat set with easy impertinence on one side the head—'That,' said my poor mother, after finishing her description, 'that is what I call being well dressed!' And I have no doubt that Captain Pigott wore the fashion with a grace;

[¹ One indication of the date at which this Autobiography was probably begun. It is, I think, more than forty years since coloured under-waistcoats were worn.—L.]

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for I knew him well when he was past sixty—a General and a Baronet—and, besides being still so handsome that he might have captivated many a young lady with a heart free to give (and I suspect that he did so, for he was a gay man), he was also a great beau, and carried off his dandyism with the airy ease of the true fine gentleman.

This incipient courtship, however, only lasted a fortnight. The Captain, accustomed to rapid conquests, committed the fatal imprudence of declaring himself both too soon and in too offhand a way. He put the question in that trenchant, positive, unpoetical form which leaves to true modesty none of its little hesitating subterfuges, but calls for a plain ‘Yes,’ or ‘No.’ And my mother, as maids so pressed, and who have not yet sounded their own minds, muttered ‘No,’ and escaped from the room. The Captain did not take the ‘No’ as a wise lover and a bold Irishman ought to have done. He was wholly discouraged and disheartened by it. It was a ‘No’ which he did not attempt to sap and mine, starve out, or blockade: it was a ‘No’ at which he raised the siege in retreat. Perhaps you will think that he was not much in love, since so soon out of heart; but if you think so, you are mistaken. For long years after, when we were riding out together, and he had no object to deceive me (indeed, he was a frank man, and had little or no deceit in him), he assured me, with serious earnestness, ‘that he had been truly and deeply enamoured; and for that reason,’ said he, ‘I was timid for the first time in my life. I felt that there was a great deal in Miss Lytton’s character very much above my deserts; and, moreover, she was a great heiress, and I then but a soldier of fortune.’

So the Captain went away the next day. Elizabeth at first was a little sad; she missed the rides, and the compliments, and the gay smile that had lighted up the old walls; but the impression was but skin-deep, and soon scarred over. ‘My dear,’ said my mother to me, in allusion to Marmontel’s pretty tale, ‘it was but the rose-coloured phial.’

CHAPTER VII.

(Autobiographical.)

THE DESERTED HOUSE. 1790.

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VII.

BUT the time now came when Elizabeth was to return to her mother. Nearly a year had passed away since her arrival at Knebworth, and Mrs. Lytton grew nervous and jealous. My grandfather, in the meanwhile, had become accustomed to his daughter's society. He was better able to appreciate her intellect (though he never understood her character) than he could have been during her childhood. She accommodated herself to his ways, while her presence, almost unconsciously to herself, enlivened his studious hours. She saved him, too, all trouble in business and the household; for, in spite of her taste for poetry, she had a clear head for affairs, and had learned from her mother the womanly wisdom of economy and order. Perhaps the poor Scholar had never known so comfortable a home; and, therefore, when he saw her preparations for departure, he woke up from his Hebrew, and made a grand effort to detain her. The good man did not attempt to enforce his legal rights, and depart from the compact he had made, viz. to assure her liberty of choice as to residence with either parent. Neither did he flatter himself that he had become the first object in her affections. But he had learned from his classics that woman loves power, and is dazzled by show; and so, with awkward eloquence, he made his appeal to these feminine infirmities. 'Stay with me, Bessy,' quoth the Scholar, 'stay with me, and I'll tell you what I will do. I

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had forsworn London ; I will return to it. I will take a great house, as many servants as you think you can manage (keep them out of my way as much as you can). In the summer we will come again to Knebworth, more in state. Carriages and horses you may have—I don't care how many. As for money, somehow or other I never have too much of it ; but every sixpence I have, you shall have. You shall be presented at Court ; I will smarten myself up ; we will go into the great world, and you shall have with me—what I know you like, and what Lady Hawke calls “your proper station.” You can't have it with Mrs. Lytton. Live with me, Bessy !

My poor grandfather ! if he had then flung himself on his daughter's heart, or shed one of the tears which I am sure were swelling big at his throat, I think (I confess I hope) that he might so far have carried his point—that, on condition of seeing her mother while in London daily, Elizabeth would have consented to make her chief home with him. But my grandfather had not learned from his classics the true way to a woman's heart ; he never showed his own. He was too shy, or too proud.¹

Now, it is quite true that my mother loved power, and felt

[¹ I find among the letters of my great-grandfather Lytton one, written a year later to his daughter (April 17, 1791) which seems to renew the proposal. It shows a great craving for her companionship and (one would say) a great capacity of affection. ‘My dear girl’ (he writes)—‘I would say my dear angel girl, but that I would not be confounded with Mrs. Gunning, whom I take to be the worst writer of our language—when I receive your French letter I will answer it in that language. But in your last there is an expression which is in the language of my own heart, too seldom heard or spoken. You say it is written with all the warmth of an affectionate daughter. O my dear, how much does that expression say ! If your actions should hereafter correspond with it, I shall be one of the happiest men in the world. The circumstance for which you so strongly express your gratitude is a mere trifle, compared with what you might reasonably, and certainly, expect if you would but live with me. In that case I repeat, and I give you my honour, that I would divide my annual income fairly between us. If you can hear of a parent who is inclined to go greater lengths, I beg of you to point him out to me. If not, you will know what value to set on my affection : a value fixed by the discernment of your own good sense, and not by ignorant and prejudiced persons. I remain my dear girl's most tender and most affectionate parent,

‘RICHARD WARBURTON LYTTON. —L.]

sensibly the loss of her rightful station, and to most girls of nineteen my grandfather's offer would have been irresistible; contrasting the prospects so opened with the card-tables in Upper Seymour Street, and a knack of 'keeping down,' which my grandmother, with her fluent talk, animal spirits, and inclination to what is vulgarly called snubbing, pre-eminently possessed. But Elizabeth, with that lynx-like penetration which belongs to those intuitively just and honest, saw that these offers were in reality a bribe to abandon the mother who was daily awaiting her return, and whom she had promised, with faithful tears, never to desert. She felt, too, that her residence with the separated wife gave to Mrs. Lytton a respectability and a position which no mere visits could bestow. In short, both her heart and her honour were on the side of the weaker party. Sometimes, leaning (it may be) towards the man, as men, they say (I think untruly), are apt to do—and fancying that my own greater knowledge of the scholarly character makes me comprehend my grandfather better than those about him could well do—sometimes, I have fancied that my mother gave to her other parent a larger share of her heart and affection than was quite just. But then, there was this in my mother which, even supposing her love to both had been equal, would have been to her father's disadvantage. Where two sides were presented to her, inclination and duty the same on each, but a great worldly sacrifice to herself on the one side, it was that side which she would have been sure to choose.

Nevertheless, I need not say that she was profoundly touched and affected by my grandfather's proposition. She attempted gratefully to soften the weeping negative she thought herself bound to give. But, when he saw that the negative was coming, he turned and left her, and never resumed the subject.

So my mother returned to Seymour Street; and the episode of musing romance and rural dignity, which that year

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had been interwoven in the trite poem of her young life, closed upon the card-tables and the snubbing.

On his side, my grandfather had no intention of staying in the solitude to which he was left. Exposed to the incursions of troublesome tenants and frivolous visitors (no active, graceful, she-creature any longer to take them off his erudite hands), he cast a rapid eye over the furniture and chattels of the manor-house, to see if they were readily convertible into money; and, faded damasks, high-backed chairs, and Elizabethan cabinets, with bad locks and carved panels, not being then the rage, he beheld little worth the chance of an auction. There had been a library at Knebworth, but that had been bequeathed to the widow of the last Mr. Robinson Lytton; and, as my grandfather had never shown her the attentions that people who have something to leave expect as their due, that library she had willed away from him; together with certain lands which belonged to her, and which lay close to the Park pales. But the plate was left. I suspect it was an heirloom. However, that suspicion, no doubt, never occurred to my grandfather; for he was not more wasteful than he was honest. The plate! If there was a luxurious vanity in the world which more than any other my grandfather was likely to despise, it would be plate. Salvers and cups, the pride of successive generations, were hastily huddled up, and joyously hurried off. Among these I must mention, with regret, an article which seems to show that, with rich county gentlemen, there was more luxury of old in this unproductive wealth than our antiquarians would lead us to expect. It was a great table—its age unknown—of solid silver, slab and legs. O grandfather, grandfather! I have done my pious best to pass lightly over thine errors, but when I think of that table—such a relic of former magnificence—for what you or I know, the gift of some grateful king to wise counsellor or gallant knight—for surely no Lytton in his senses would have bought so heavy a gew-gaw with his own money—when I think of that table, I say,

melted down into vulgar half-crowns and shillings, I declare that my gorge rises, and if my mother could have come into the world without thee, I would as lief thou hadst never been born !

These spoliations completed, my grandfather next solemnly committed all his affairs into the hands of a person well fitted to squeeze out their juices, and put off his employer with the rind : a cunning man, who had been his servant at Oxford, and whom he had elevated into the rank of his steward ; while, in order to make him feel comfortable and at home in the village, he bestowed upon this worthy's brother the living of Knebworth. How that brother—who, to judge by his sermons and the spelling of his letters, was scarce fit to be a parish clerk—ever got orders as a parson, is one of the mysteries of the last century. Thus these Adelphi may be said to have settled the property between them ; and my grandfather, having by so wise a family arrangement provided for the reduction of his income to an amount most harmonious to the wants of a sage, turned his back for ever upon the halls of his ancestors. Knebworth was let first, I believe, to the Duke of St. Albans, who resigned it with the complaint that it cost him his fortune in coals and candles. Then it was occupied by a wealthy family named Sutton, nearly related to the Archbishop of Canterbury ; and when they too left, a worthy old couple named Haggard were prevailed upon to live in some corner of it, with one or two servants, for which privilege they had even the magnanimity to pay 50*l.* a year. I think it was on leaving Hertfordshire that my grandfather betook himself to Boulogne ; where he bought a house, and no doubt shared the enthusiasm of the French for Freedom, Themistocles, and Brutus, until there came that great historical hurley-burley, from which he was so fortunate as to escape with his head on his shoulders. As for the house, and all he had spent on it, and all that he put into it, they vanished for ever from his possession, into that bottomless pit for selfish property called '*Fraternisation.*'

CHAPTER VIII.

(Autobiographical.)

ELIZABETH LYTTON. 1790-97.

BOOK I. I THINK I am just arrived at that period in my mother's life when she ought to sit to me for her portrait.

1800-11. Elizabeth Lytton was about the middle height, rather below than above it; though, as few persons know themselves, that was one of the truths of which she could never be convinced. She considered herself a tall woman; and said, between jest and earnest, that no one had ever called that fact in question till she was seen leaning on the arms of sons so uncomfortably removed from the average stature of mankind.¹ But, if her stature was among things disputable, no one ever denied that in point of symmetry and proportion she 'was of the finest order of fine forms.' Even in old age, and in spite of an obstinate adherence to antiquated fashions of dress, not favourable to the setting off her figure, every connoisseur of female beauty was struck with the grace and lightness of her shape; the swanlike length of throat—the fall of shoulder—the waist so slender, but so rounded, which yet was never pinched by corset or stays—the elegant sweep of limb, and hands and feet of a beauty which I have never seen equalled.² Till long past the age of sixty, the exactness

[¹ The eldest of them was the only tall one.—L.]

[² My father's own hands and feet were singularly small and well-shaped. As he inherited these features from his mother, and as he had probably noticed, when a boy, that the original owners of the suits of equestrian armour which had escaped the dismantlement of Knebworth, must also



A. D. 1800. The 18. 2.

*Elizabeth Barbara Lytton,
from a miniature at Knebworth.*

of her proportions might be judged by her very step—so firm, so elastic, so gliding, as it were, and rising up from the ground it touched.

Of the character of her countenance, I must speak, not as I remember it, when the fair clearness of the complexion was gone ; when many an illness and many a grief had hollowed the cheek and deepened the lines ; but, as I can best judge, by the portraits of her youth, and those who remembered her before marriage.

Her face was by no means critically handsome. The nose, though of very fine outline, was too aquiline for female beauty ; the mouth was too wide, and the chin not sufficiently rounded ; but, on the other hand, her eyes, if small, were the colour of the violet, and shaded by dark and very long lashes. When her mind was aroused, they were singularly intelligent ; when her heart was touched, singularly soft. The eyebrow was arched and fine, as if lined by a pencil. The hair of the richest chestnut in colour, exceedingly delicate in texture, and so redundant that, when young and released from its bondage, it reached below the knee. The head was very small, and so placed on the neck that its every turn had grace and distinction. She had the prettiest white ear in the world. Her complexion was fair and rather pale, but it varied into blushes with each emotion. And I may add that, of the many complimentary poems addressed to 'Eliza' by her flatterers or admirers, there are none which do not allude to a modest dignity that characterised her to the last. She was always among the shyest women I have known—a shyness arising from the contest between diffidence and self-esteem.

have had small hands and feet, he regarded them as transmitted tokens of continuity in the physical characteristics of his race, and was fond of ascribing the possession of them to those characters in his own works whose appearance was intended by him to exhibit the attributes of gentle birth. This was ridiculed by many critics as a sign of the author's personal vanity. Nor was the author (in his younger days) wholly free from the vanity of which they accused him. But he was more vain of his ancestry than of his person.—L.]

BOOK

I.

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She went into the world with a consciousness that people would like her better if she could make herself better known to them, and a conviction that she could never have the courage to do so.¹

Of conversational talent in mixed society she had not a scintilla. But if quite at her ease, and with one other person whom she liked and trusted, she was a most agreeable companion—with an observation extremely keen, very quick and shrewd insight into character and motive, remarks full of subtlety and *finesse*, and an innocent, delicate, vein of humour which was much more entertaining than wit. To wit she had no pretensions.

The year passed with her father at his family seat, though unattended with any ostentatious parade, or any memorable hospitality, served nevertheless to make Miss Lytton's position as an heiress better known on her return to her mother's roof; and whether in London, or at the watering-places to which Mrs. Lytton adjourned the wars of casino and quadrille, there was no lack of candidates for the hand of a young lady so favoured by nature and fortune. But my mother reached the age of two-and-twenty without having received a more lively impression from the rosy god than the faint and fading reminiscence of the handsome Captain Pigott.

The hour then arrived for that event in the history of women which, in earnest natures, stands single and alone among the joys and sorrows of the heart. In the pew opposite to that which Mrs. and Miss Lytton occupied in the chapel of Quebec Street, there sat habitually a middle-aged, respectable-looking couple; and, as at that day it was a kindly

[¹ This feeling, which he never outlived, my father also inherited from his mother. From her also he inherited her remarkable business capacity, her thrift in little things, her generosity in great; and a very strong sentiment of what is commonly called the pride of birth, though it deserves perhaps some gentler appellation when (as in his case and in hers), taking no vulgar colour from the vanities of wealth or rank, it assumes a form in which the Romans revered it as *Pietas*.—L.]

custom, after divine service, for the members of the congregation to exchange silent bows before opening the pew-doors and leaving church, so this hebdomadal and courteous recognition of each other's existence had been naturally established between the two ladies and their neighbours in the opposite pew. One Sunday there appeared with this worthy couple a third person, in the shape of a young man of about four-and-twenty; with a high forehead and fair hair, and a sweet, grave, sensible expression of countenance. When the time came for bowing, the stranger invested his salutation with an air of peculiar deference. Elizabeth thought she had never received such a bow before.

On leaving church, as they walked back to Upper Seymour Street, Mrs. Lytton said to her daughter :

‘Did you observe that young man in the pew with the Rawlinses?’

My mother blushed, and murmured an inarticulate ‘Yes.’

‘Ah!’ said Mrs. Lytton, good-humouredly, ‘I should have thought that was just the young man that no young woman could help observing.’

My mother thought the same thing, but she said nothing.

A few evenings afterwards, at a party given by one of the foreign ministers, where the eternal cards were relieved by a little dance, which the politeness of Continental manners had compassionately got up impromptu for the young people present, the hostess approached Miss Lytton, and requested leave to introduce to her as a partner Mr. Rawlins, a gentleman who had just returned from his travels. My mother walked up, and saw before her the young man whose bow had conveyed so much on the Sunday before.

At that time it was a distinction to have been abroad; it gave to a young man a certain reputation—nay, a certain romantic interest. He was not only supposed to have acquired a right to constitute himself a judge of arts and manners, but to have gone through strange perils and wild adventures. Mr.

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Rawlins talked well on the wonders he had seen, and smiled, perhaps, at the *naïve* curiosity of his fair partner. He had been in the land of Goethe, whose first romance was then to the youth of Europe what 'Childe Harold' was afterwards. He knew the supposed original of that wondrous tale of sentiment and sorrow, which my mother in some of her prettiest drawings had illustrated. He could speak of the French Court, and described Marie Antoinette. He quoted a line from Racine, and forgot the one that followed. Elizabeth, colouring much, timidly suggested it. Then, from the French drama they got into Italian literature, and were pleased to find each other at home in Metastasio, whose 'homely music of verse was then the fashion. In short, they separated as those separate who are charmed at the first sight, and see paradise opening from the first meeting. The London season was nearly over: the mother and daughter went to Tunbridge Wells. Mr. Rawlins followed; they rode together in the day, and danced together at night; acquaintance ripened into intimacy, intimacy into courtship.

That lovely country in the neighbourhood of the old Spa, made classical ground by Grammont, my mother always spoke of as the Arcadia of England. But in after life she would never return to those scenes, and yet never confess why. At one time I used to go often to Tunbridge Wells, striving in fancy to re-people the deserted Pantiles with the gay Court of Charles II., or stealing away that I might dream of Sidney under the oaks of Penshurst. When I returned from such excursions, my mother was always eager to question me as to any changes in the topography of the place; then she used to sigh quietly, fall into a reverie, and was always a shade sadder the next day.

Mr. Rawlins was a younger son without fortune, and of a family very inferior to my mother's. But whatever her pride on the score of descent, it is a proof how little harshness there was in that foible, that it never influenced her when her affections were touched. Nay, in this case, it never even seemed to

occur to her ; and in her old age, when her pride was at its height, and she would speak with majestic disdain of some coroneted *roturier* who had chafed the sore point and roused the pedigree to revolt, she never alluded to Mr. Rawlins, the merchant's son, but in terms of such respect that you might have thought him descended from Charlemagne. For his sake, unlike provincial gentry in general, she viewed with reverence the whole class of merchants ; to her, they were all that poets and political economists have called them—the princely Genoese of the world ; ‘such deck a throne.’ She was never more indignant than when a town-idler, or a country squire, indulged in a sneer at commerce. If she got over any objection to her lover on the score of birth, there seemed no likelihood that one so philosophical as my grandfather, the pupil of Dr. Parr, and the admirer of republican institutions, would ever be scrupulous on a point so immaterial, and turn his back upon his own favourite motto—‘*Virtus est sola nobilitas.*’ Therefore it was with no dread of the result that, on returning to London, Mr. Rawlins was permitted to write to Mr. Lytton, state his pretensions, and entreat my grandfather’s consent.

One afternoon a gentleman knocked at the door of Upper Seymour Street, and, requesting to see Miss Lytton, was announced as Mr. Milnes Lowndes. The name was familiar to my mother as that of the nephew of one of my grandfather’s oldest, and most distinguished, friends ; but she had never seen the bearer of the name, and was much fluttered and agitated when, on entering, he drew forth a letter from my grandfather, and with an air of great gravity told her that he had been particularly requested by Mr. Lytton to place that letter in her own hands. The solemnity of this address, and the serious look of Mr. Milnes Lowndes, led Miss Lytton to fear that her father was ill, and had perhaps sent for her. She withdrew to the window to read the letter, while Mr. Lowndes seated himself at a distance.

The letter was a thunderbolt. In a few short, stern, lines my

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grandfather conveyed his peremptory rejection of Mr. Rawlins's suit, and his command to his daughter that he should hear no more on the subject. There were, I think, also some concluding sarcasms at Mrs. Lytton's talents for match-making.

My grandfather assigned no reason for his austere determination, and at the first glance it was not easy to detect one. It is true that few fathers in Mr. Lytton's position would have thought Mr. Rawlins a suitable match in point of family and connections; but I am persuaded that this was the last idea which occurred to my grandfather. I suspect his reasons were twofold: first, he could not but see that his consent to such a marriage would oblige him to make a suitable pecuniary provision for the young couple, and he never had a shilling to spare; secondly, he wished that any husband bestowed on his daughter should be rather chosen by himself than approved of by his wife. He might still have a yearning for his child's society, and in that case could not but believe that much would depend upon the degree of sympathy which her husband would experience for himself *versus* Mrs. Lytton.

And that this last reason—excusable by the jealousy of parental affection—did influence him, seems to me the more probable when I consider that he had committed his letter to Mr. Milnes Lowndes, a young man not related to him, and wholly a stranger to his daughter. Such a proceeding on the part of a man with the slightest knowledge of the world would have been singularly indecorous and indelicate. But I am sure that the poor Scholar thought it a master-stroke. The young heroines in the Greek tragedians speak in the bitterest terms of the privation, not so much of this husband or of that, as of any husband at all. Now, in depriving his daughter of Mr. Rawlins, my grandfather compassionately deemed it just to provide a substitute—a husband of his own choice. Indeed, he had already half explained his intentions to Mr. Milnes Lowndes, whom he liked for his own sake, and his uncle's. He had said, 'Why should not our families be allied? You

ought to marry ; there is my daughter—an heiress, you know, and a good-looking girl ; no fool, though she would never learn Latin. Her mother wants to marry her to some fellow in London, so that I may never see her again. I have put a stop to that scheme. You are going to town ; take this letter to my daughter, give it into her hands, or Mrs. Lytton may throw it into the fire. Afterwards, win her heart. You see, if she would marry this man, why, of course, she would marry you ; and then we can contrive, perhaps, to live all together.'

Mr. Milnes Lowndes, then, was aware, not of the exact contents of the letter, but of its general purport ; and though he did not suspect, from my grandfather's conversation, that Miss Lytton's affections were seriously engaged, he was still struck with admiration of her self-command, when she turned from the window and addressed to him a few words of inquiry as to her father's health. After which he had the tact and good breeding to withdraw.

Alas ! what he had supposed self-command was but the calm stun that follows a great blow, before the reaction of thought brings the agony. My grandmother, as may be supposed from her antecedents, was not inclined to consider the commands of her husband as an indisputable authority. She revolted against him on behalf of her child, as she had done for herself. Despite some levity and worldliness of character, she was a virtuous woman, and strictly correct in her conduct ; more than a negative merit, considering the temptations to which she had been exposed ; but she had not a high and habitual sense of duty, as she proved in this case. She advised and encouraged her daughter to set aside a command enforced by no argument, and fatal to her happiness.

'You are of age,' she said. 'You are independent of your father by law, and will, if you survive, be equally independent by fortune ; and for the present I have saved money. Mr. Rawlins is not extravagant ; he has great abilities, which will ensure him success in a profession, or in some public employment

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I

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that our friends may obtain for him. Meanwhile, you can both live with me, and share what I possess.'

But my mother did not listen to so tempting a counselor, nor to the one more dangerous at her own heart. With her, Duty had become so interwoven with all her feelings and motives for action, that it had obtained the strength of an instinct.

And so, with a trembling hand, she wrote to Mr. Rawlins, cited, in softening it, her father's letter, and closed the dream of her life.

She remembered every word of her own letter, and I once coaxed her into copying it for me. It was a notable contrast to the despairing farewells of Romance, or to the headlong passionate expressions which rush from the pen of young ladies in these our modern days. It began 'Sir;' it was comprised in two sides of a sheet of note-paper. Yet, through the formal style and the brief sentences, there was a latent depth of feeling, an unconscious sigh from the whole simple, modest, breaking heart, which a poet (but perhaps your true poet only) would have found more pathetic than his most burning verse, or than all the epistolary effusions he might have received from some female enthusiast who, adoring the genius, believed that she loved the man.

But Mr. Rawlins was no poet. A man of a proud and very exacting temper, somewhat spoiled, perhaps, by former conquests, and thinking that is not true love which submits to the control of duty (a common error with both sexes), he received his dismissal with haughty and mute resentment, increased by learning from Mrs. Lytton her own advice, and her own offer to smooth all obstacles of a pecuniary nature.

He made no reply to the letter. Some time later he met Miss Lytton in society. He was leaning against the door as she passed—gave one look of bitter disdain—and left the room.

Shortly afterwards he went to India; and the resentment which proved the keenness, but not the generosity, of his

attachment remained unchanged. For when, after the lapse of years, he heard from a friend of both parties that Miss Lytton was married, and, it was feared, not happy in marriage, he said vindictively, 'It is as she deserves. She preferred wealth to affection.' Words which the same kind friend repeated to the woman they wronged so cruelly.¹

[¹ The last time Miss Lytton ever saw Mr. Rawlins was on the occasion mentioned here by my father, when not a word was exchanged between them. This was four years before her marriage. Two years after that event she received intelligence of his death. It occurred in India, whence he never returned to England.—L.]

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CHAPTER IX.

(Autobiographical.)

LAST SUITORS. 1797.

BOOK
I.

1808-11

‘ You were very unhappy after this ? ’ said I once to my mother.

‘ Oh, very ; but as there was no help for it, I struggled against it.’

‘ That is easy to say.’

‘ And not so hard to do, when it was so plainly my duty.’

Duty again ! That was my mother all over.

While this silent struggle went on, Mr. Milnes Lowndes had contrived to establish himself in favour with my grandmother. He became a frequent visitor ; at last, what the French call *l’ami de la maison*.

His attentions to Miss Lytton were silent and unobtrusive. She did not guess that he understood her situation, but he seemed intuitively to respect it.

Mr. Milnes Lowndes was a fair scholar, very accomplished ; of manners somewhat formal, but dignified ; of habits of life regular and decorous, and his character stood deservedly high. He pleased my grandmother by the figure he made in the world. He was of a family which pretended to rank amongst the most ancient, had himself a good fortune, and was the elder son of a man of large estates. His age was about thirty ; and, while free from the vices of fashion, a considerable elegance of taste made him readily accommodate himself to its forms and shows.

More than a year had passed since Mr. Rawlins had wholly vanished from the scene, before Mr. Milnes Lowndes took courage and proposed. This offer took my mother by surprise, and pained her deeply. For she had taken a sisterly liking to the quiet and somewhat melancholy man, with his refined manners, and tastes in literature very much assimilating to her own; and when he told her how long he had silently loved her, and, delicately implying his knowledge of her prior attachment, pressed not for more of love than his own regard might ultimately obtain, she was startled to think how immense an interval there is between liking and loving. She answered him by as soothing and gentle a refusal as she could convey: a refusal so gentle, though meant to be firm, that he readily believed my grandmother, when she told him not to be disheartened. For Mrs. Lytton, as became a lady of social temperament, began to wish to see her daughter settled in life.

Unluckily perhaps for himself, however, Mr. Milnes Lowndes thought it best to bring my grandfather also more visibly on his side; and, by way of expediting matters, confided the whole to his father. That gentleman, who was almost as great an oddity as Mr. Lytton himself, jumped at the idea, and, without saying a word to his son, sat down and wrote a long letter to my grandfather: a letter taking the thing for granted; plunging at once into business (for Mr. Lowndes Senior was a prudent man), coming slap-dash upon the questions of settlement and provision, dower and jointure; raising turbulent queries as to whether, if Mrs. Lytton died, my grandfather would feel inclined to marry again; for, if so, he might have a son, and then, as sons took precedence of daughters in the entail, what would become of Miss Lytton's inheritance? This should be provided for. Would my grandfather insure his life for the benefit of Miss Lytton, in case of such marriage and male issue? In short, just the sort of letter to frighten my grandfather out of his wits, and make

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all the parasites, hangers-on, and money-leeches—by whom he had now surrounded himself, and from whom he had no secrets—set up one indignant chorus of warning. Was he going to suffer himself to be imposed upon—robbed—plundered—impoverished? Provision for his daughter—that meant a princely allowance! Why, this was worse than Mr. Rawlins, who had not hinted at such a thing, and who would have been contented with very little. Questions whether he would marry again? What impertinence! Whether, if so, he would bind himself to insure his life? What cold-blooded calculation on his death!

All these, and many other outcries, similar and dissimilar, were screeched into his ears. My grandfather seized his pen, and replied by a letter composed on the epic principle of beginning, middle, and end. He began with declarations of astonishment, proceeded with protestations that he would bind himself to nothing, and concluded with his favourite and pathetic peroration in all manner of affairs: to wit, ‘that he begged to be troubled no more upon the business.’ The receipt of this letter threw Mr. Lowndes senior into a paroxysm of fury. He sent for his son, and exploded into anathemas on the head of the lover if he presumed to think any further of his mistress.

Mr. Milnes Lowndes, though a quiet man, and hitherto an obedient and good son, felt that his fate at the age of thirty could not be thus rocked to the base by the breath of an angry lip; and his own resentment rose high at his father’s indiscreet mode of dealing with one who required to be managed with such adroitness as Mr. Lytton. Clumsy, indeed, had been the diplomacy which converted his first auxiliary—nay, the instigator to his suit—into an unexpected and formidable opponent. After a stormy scene between father and son, Mr. Milnes Lowndes left the house in great disorder, and hastened to Miss Lytton. He was naturally fearful lest her father might have written to her; and it was due to her,

though exceedingly mortifying and embarrassing to himself, to explain the false position in which the unauthorised letter of Mr. Lowndes senior had placed both parties.

Though Miss Lytton could not but be exceedingly wounded, in both her pride and her modesty, that Mr. Lowndes should have conceived her hand at the disposal of his son after her own rejection of his suit, and addressed her father upon pecuniary matters (which, since the affair of Mr. Rawlins, would have been, even had she consented to the suit of Mr. Lowndes, the very subject upon which she would have stipulated for absolute avoidance), she could not but be moved by the extreme distress of her unfortunate lover.

But when, emboldened by her gentleness and pardon, he ventured to represent that he possessed a competent fortune independent of his father, and that he did not doubt but what he could obtain the assent of her own, it may be easy to conjecture her answer. Even had she been in love with Mr. Milnes Lowndes (loved him even as she had loved Mr. Rawlins), I am sure that she would not have been satisfied with the acquiescence of her own parents. She would never have made breach between father and son, nor entered into any family without its offering a hearty welcome. Mr. Milnes Lowndes left her in that despair which is deepest in still natures. A few days after, his only brother called upon Miss Lytton. A word on this brother.

Tom Lowndes was in all respects the contrast to Milnes. Milnes was tall and slender; Tom was rather short and stout. Milnes had a long thoughtful face; Tom a round and a merry one. Milnes was refined to preciseness; Tom blunt and rough to vulgarity. Milnes was one of those men who, except when under the influence of deep and rare passions, have too much dignity to show their foibles; Tom was a sharp, rattling, talkative fellow, with just enough cleverness to be a great fool. He wrote the worst verses I ever read, and printed them. But Tom had an excellent heart, a profound love and reverence for

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his brother, whom he considered the first of mankind ; and, when he witnessed poor Milnes' grief and despondency, it flashed across his coarse, generous, mind that all affairs in life can be settled by money ; that he had a very good fortune of his own ; and that he had never had occasion to spend half of it. So he came to Miss Lytton, and offered to settle the other moiety upon his brother if she would consent to marry him. To his great astonishment, he found that this offer did not smooth matters as he had expected ; but there was something so rare in the generosity he exhibited, and so touching in the friendship between the brothers, that Tom naturally established a kindly and familiar acquaintance with one whom he did his best to convert into a sister-in-law : an acquaintance which afterwards occasioned my mother some trouble. Poor Mr. Milnes Lowndes crept away into the country, and was heard of no more. I confess that, of all the candidates for my mother's hand, he was the one who most inspires my sympathy ; the one with whom, I think, she would have been the most happy, could she have returned his affection.

When, some two years later, a carriage stood at the door of a fashionable London church, when a bride passed from the porch, and the curious bystanders pressed forwards to gaze, a low exclamation made her lift her downcast eyes, and my mother—that bride—saw amidst the crowd the mournful face of Milnes Lowndes. A year after her marriage he died of a decline.



Albany Photo. Co.

*William Earle Butler,
from a miniature at Knebworth.*

CHAPTER X.

(Autobiographical)

MISS LYTTON MARRIES COLONEL BULWER. 1798.

AMONGST the occasional, but always welcome, visitors at my grandmother's house in Seymour Street, had been for some years a gentleman who now began to call more frequently, and stay longer when he called. He had never paid any particular attention to Miss Lytton, who regarded him as her mother's counsellor and friend. Some ladies generally require some such male adjutant in their cares and troubles. The gentleman in question was of the same county as that in which my grandmother's family formerly possessed estates, where they chiefly resided. He was about two or three years younger than herself, and they had known each other from childhood. He was the man, above all others, that a lone lady would like to consult, for he was fond of business, and thoroughly understood it; the very person to settle with a bullying, extortionate, tradesman, advise with on a point of law, adjust some little social quarrel, or give the most judicious suggestions as to the safest investment for the yearly savings. This gentleman was destined to become my father. The fact was, that he had always conceived a quiet admiration for Elizabeth Lytton; while the nature of the connection he had elsewhere formed, and which, as I have said, he considered as binding as marriage, did not permit him to encourage that admiration into a warmer sentiment. But now the melancholy death of the woman to whom he had been faithfully attached for many years left him

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free; and his very grief for her loss, and the blank that it left in his existence, made him yearn for the solace of a home, and turned his thoughts towards marriage. His father, too, was dead; he had come into one portion of his property; and his mother (with whom rested the disposal of the rest, which she afterwards bequeathed to him) was extremely anxious to see the son of whom she was most fond and proud, settled in life.

Therefore, some months after the events which terminated the unprosperous courtship of Mr. Milnes Lowndes, Colonel Bulwer began to revisit the long familiar house in Upper Seymour Street, with what are called serious intentions. He was not a man who could appreciate the rarer qualities of Miss Lytton. Her intellectual tastes, and those secret virtues which lay deep from common observation in her woman's heart, would not have found in him sympathising comprehension or tender culture. But the elegance of her manners satisfied his pride; her domestic habits gave him promise of a peaceful home; and not only the graces of her person, but the very fault in her features, attracted the idiosyncrasies of his fancy. He liked small eyes, so long as they were blue. He was wont to say that large black eyes were the signs of a shrew. He liked an aquiline nose. A nose that turned up the least little bit would have disgusted him with a Venus. A woman with a turned-up nose, he would say dogmatically, is invariably a coquette.

Thus, his eye and his judgment both pleased, Colonel Bulwer wrote to his mother that he had seen much of Miss Lytton; that she was rather paler and graver than she used to be, but he thought such change became her; he had a great mind to propose. This good resolve no doubt his anxious correspondent properly encouraged. And so he told his tale.

My poor mother had often and often told herself that she had quite overcome her attachment to Mr. Rawlins; but at any proposal to give him a successor the image proved that it

was not dead, if it slept. It rose again, to haunt her thoughts and claim her fidelity. She therefore declined the Colonel's proposals, as she had done those of Mr. Milnes Lowndes.

Now, my father was one of those men who have a right, when a lady refuses them, to inquire respectfully 'why?' He was what is called an unexceptionable match in person, character, property, and station. There was a little disparity in years, but not, perhaps, more than there ought to be between man and wife. Still, as that was the only objection that occurred to himself as possible, he asked frankly if there were any other—any that it was in his power to obviate.

The long family acquaintance with Colonel Bulwer, the confidence shown to him by her mother, and the respect that she herself felt for his name and character, seemed to Miss Lytton to call for a reply as frank as the question. She therefore told him that she had known a previous attachment, which, though over, had made her feel that she could never know another, and that it was her intention not to marry.

The Colonel repaid this confidence by a manly letter; which showed more feeling than might be expected from one who had always been accustomed to have his own way, and who was generally no less annoyed than indignant when any obstacle arose between his will and its triumph. He expressed great gratitude for the trust placed in him: a trust so candid that it raised Miss Lytton, if possible, still higher in his esteem. He uttered some commonplaces, very well turned, as to the effect of time upon all human reminiscences of past emotion; and, without venturing on the presumption of hope, let it just be understood that he could not consent to despair.

He left this letter to produce what effect it might, and went down to Norfolk. Shortly afterwards his mother died. When he reappeared in London he was in deep mourning, and under great dejection of spirits. Woman is so naturally the Consoler, that his sorrow became the most eloquent pleader in his favour. My grandmother began to be importunate and urgent

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on his behalf; and, though it was very slowly that my mother consented to resign her single state, and the memories that still haunted it, yet, after more than a year's courtship from first to last, the consent was wrung from her at length. This time, my grandfather interposed no obstacle; for the Colonel gave him no trouble, and asked for no dowry. Even the settlements were drawn up by his own lawyer and Mrs. Lytton's; and my grandfather, in amaze that his daughter could be married with so little fatigue to him, and thinking from the Colonel's character that he was not likely to be ruled by a mother-in-law to the prejudice of male rights and claims, bestowed his hearty benediction upon the nuptials.

Thus, after heroically burning the letters of Mr. Rawlins, and consigning to the care of her mother (sealed up and never reopened till her widowhood) some slight innocent tokens of the old romance, Elizabeth Lytton passed to the marriage altar; perhaps with a foreboding heart, but with a firm resolve to discharge the new duties the new situation called for.¹

I end this chapter with a brief sketch of my father at that time: partly from his picture by Cosway, partly from oral descriptions.

He was about forty years of age, with dark-brown hair and light-blue eyes, which were large, well opened, and could be very stern and very soft. He had a very good forehead, high and unwrinkled, not showing much thought, but bold in its expression, and with the organs of perception strongly marked; for the rest, his face, without being handsome, was what may fairly be called comely and good-looking. He was of the middle stature, with an erect military mien; and, though to appearance rather slender than thick-set, he had an extraordinary strength of nerve or muscle, which gave him fame in many an athletic feat.

Had his natural abilities been properly trained and duly cultivated, I have no doubt that he would have been a very

¹ June 1, 1798.

eminent man. For he had most of those moral qualities which ensure success to mental effort; a will of iron, a combative temper that nothing daunted and nothing deterred; a love of command, and a promptness of judgment that enforced obedience; a stubborn and a patient ambition.¹ But my grandmother's distaste to reading was not greater than his. His efforts at that operation were confined to the newspaper, which he read from the first advertisement down to the printer's name.

Once, in the honeymoon year of marriage, he found my poor mother looking into Thomson's 'Seasons.' The page happened to be opened at the hackneyed but very beautiful passage commemorative of wedded bliss, beginning—

Oh happy they, the happiest of their kind, &c.

So, as he took the book, she asked him smilingly to read aloud. My father, with his accustomed boldness, unterrified by the novelty of the undertaking, put himself into a martial attitude, and thundered out the verse. Had he been at the head of his regiment, indulging in classic fashion in some animated harangue to his soldiers, he could not have given a louder and more truculent emphasis to those poor pastoral, peaceable, numbers. My mother, when she had recovered the first shock, made a snatch at the book; and, failing in the attempt, ran fairly out of the room.

¹ Strength of will, pertinacity of purpose, promptness of judgment, ambition, and the love of command, which were also strongly marked in my father's character, he probably inherited from his military sire. But the General's combative spirit was less forcibly transmitted to his son; in whom this quality, though not deficient, had little spontaneous activity. He was not argumentative, and loved not disputation or conflict for their own sake. Hot-tempered, and quick-witted, he could say, in anger, many bitter things; and in discussion, when it was forced upon him, his retorts were sometimes keenly satirical and stinging. But the sensitiveness of his own feelings made him habitually shrink from hurting the feelings of others; and he never did so gratuitously. The conditions of his early struggle with the world were of a peculiarly combative character. But he was not combative unless provoked. One reason, perhaps, for his dislike of political life, after he had experienced the conditions of it.—[L.]

CHAPTER XI.

(Autobiographical.)

BIRTH OF WILLIAM, HENRY, AND EDWARD BULWER. 1803.

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MY brother William came into the world a remarkably fine child, as he has since grown up into a remarkably fine man.¹

My brother Henry came second;² and my grandmother, missing her daughter sadly (though she had done her best to get rid of her), implored hard to have the charge of him. My father, concentrating all his philoprogenitiveness upon his eldest son, and not unpleased to think one of the younger might, without incumbrance to his estates, be handsomely provided for (he knew that Mrs. Lytton had a very pretty sum in the funds), gave full consent. It was the greatest sacrifice my mother could then make to the parent for whom no sacrifice seemed too great: and so she made it. Another boy was born, and died. Afterwards came myself.

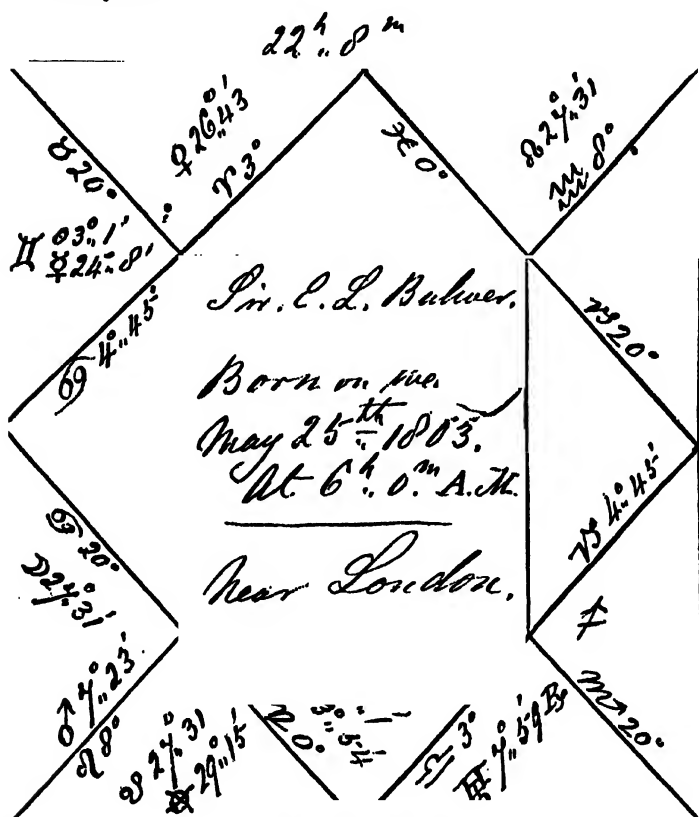
I was born on a certain twenty-fifth of May,³ about eight o'clock in the morning, and in Baker Street, Portman Square, No. 31. If some curious impertinents are anxious to know in what year of our Lord that event took place, let them find out for themselves. For my own part, I have never had the least wish to know at what age any man, whose life or writings inspired me with the least interest, entered and left this bustling planet. Nay, on the contrary, I always shun that knowledge, and, if it be forced upon me, try to forget it. I form my own idea of a man's age, and am not disposed to change it at the

[¹ Born April 28, 1799.—L.] [² Born February 13, 1801.—L.] [³ 1803.—L.]

whim of a chronologist. It is in vain to tell me that Voltaire was once young Aroutet; to me he is always the old man with the crutch-cane, and the wrinkled visage, sharp with a thousand sneers. It is in vain to tell me that Petrarch died at sixty-eight; I see him only as he first saw Laura—at the golden age of twenty-seven.

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FACSIMILE OF HOROSCOPE.¹

[¹ 1803. In the year 1854 my father's horoscope was cast by an astrologer on the assumption that 'the native' had been born at 6 A.M. Wednesday, May 25, 1803, near London. But the astrologer's authority for these data is unknown to me. The figure of the nativity is subjoined as a curiosity. The year and the day of the month are correctly stated in it. The day of the week and the hour of the day may possibly be correct also. But my father was undoubtedly born in London, not near it.—L.]

CHAPTER XII.

(Autobiographical.)

ELIZABETH'S MARRIED LIFE. 1803-1804.

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I WAS born just at the time when my mother's married life was saddest. For in unions, however ill-assorted, so long as there are good qualities on either side, it takes some few years before one can part with hope. And at first, though my father's temper was of the roughest, yet he was very much in love; and love has a good-humour of its own. But gradually the temper rose superior to the love; and gout, to which from early youth my father had been occasionally subjected, now suddenly fixed upon him premature and almost habitual residence. He bore pain with the fierce impatience common to the strong when they suffer; and it exasperated all the passions which, even in health and happiness, that powerful and fiery organisation could but imperfectly control. My father, too, was of a jealous nature; and, having no one else to be jealous of, the jealousy fell upon his mother-in-law. That is too frequent a fault with husbands to be much wondered at. But one great inducement to his wife in marrying him had been the thought that he appreciated and cordially liked her mother; and she had pleased herself in picturing the welcome she should give to that mother at her own home, till the home and the parent became clasped in the same chain of associations.

Perhaps she showed too unwarily the pleasure she conceived from this idea, and made too warm and joyous the welcome she had yearned to give. At all events, my father frowned and growled; and, finally, with his usual promptness

of decision, he spoke out his mind so plainly to Mrs. Lytton that she could never set foot in his house again. This was tearing at the roots of the strongest affection in my mother's heart, and her sorrow thereat was a new offence to jealousy : a lasting offence, for it never ceased.

What with secret grief, and what with terror (for she had been little accustomed to the loud voice and the lowering brow), my mother's constitution, always delicate, began to give way ; the nerves were shattered. One or two severe feverish illnesses, which endangered her life, and from which she recovered but slowly, assisted to break her spirits ; and to the dejected mind was added the enfeebled frame. You might see, in her old age, that she had passed through some crisis of great fear and great sorrow. At the least surprise or alarm a passing, painful, twitching of the nerves altered the features of the face ; there was on her brow the weight of the old anxiety, and round the corners of her mouth those lines which are never ploughed but by grief.

My eldest brother was less of a tie between both parents than children usually are. My father considered the heir to his name as his special property not to be encroached upon. He regarded the mother's right as a privilege of temporary sufferance ; the nursery was not her empire ; it was a delegation. Henry was gone from her ; his first words were for another's ear, his first caresses solaced another's heart. And, therefore, when a child was born to her, in her darkest hour—a child all her own—a child weakly and delicate, that claimed all her care—a child not destined to the heritage of Heydon, and therefore left undisputed to the government in which woman most desires to reign alone,—with the birth of it joy seemed born again, and the dreams that had deserted her own life gathered round the cradle of her infant.

It was not long before, from an object of indifference to my father, I became one of positive dislike. It may be that I shared in the same jealousy which had enveloped my grand-

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mother. But I think that my father had also another cause for the scowls with which he greeted my unconscious aspect. The lands of Lytton, if ever they devolved on my mother, would be at her own disposal: and he must have known enough of my mother's family pride to suspect that she would have a strong desire to keep the distinct representation of her own line apart from that of the Bulwers. William would inherit Heydon; Henry, in all probability, the fortune of his grandmother. It was possible that my mother would think that justice might allow her to select her own heir and representative in me. That was an idea that would have been eminently offensive to my father; who, an eldest son himself, naturally venerated the sanctity of primogeniture; and would gladly have seen every acre in Knebworth under the hammer of the auctioneer, in order that the proceeds might enable him to add to the hereditary domains in Norfolk. Norfolk men are fond of their natal soil. And my father was accustomed to say that he would rather have a rood in Norfolk than an estate in any other county.¹

Naturally enough, my father's aversion to me, whatever its cause, made my mother cling to me the more fondly.

[¹ There is no class of the English community in which local sentiment is to this day stronger or more tenacious than the landed gentry; and no part of the country in which it is stronger than in Norfolk. The isolation of that county, before the days of steam, rendered Norfolk families dependent for social intercourse mainly on their own immediate neighbourhood. Generation after generation they had made intermarriages between themselves which strengthened their attachment to their own county. Thus, mixing much with each other, and little with the rest of the world, they contracted a strong provincial patriotism: and from the following letter it would appear that even the first day of my grandmother's married life required from her a surrender of sentiment, arising out of the rival claims of Knebworth and Heydon. 'Colonel Bulwer presents his compliments to Mr. Price, with the assurance that he would have felt much pleasure in requesting Mr. Price to officiate on a late occasion; particularly as it was so much the wish of the person he holds most dear. But, the Dean of Norwich having been Colonel Bulwer's tutor, she was good enough to give up her desire to the fulfilment of a promise of long standing made to the Dean. Colonel Bulwer hopes that Mr. Price will give him a proof of having excused this arrangement by doing him the honour to accept, as a remembrance of the event, a token he has taken the liberty of sending by the Stevenage coach.'—L.]

A few months after my birth (whilst still in very infirm health), she was ordered to Brighton : and here she met with an unexpected annoyance from the brother of her old lover, Mr. Milnes Lowndes.

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Æt. 1-4

Tom had continued a familiar acquaintance with my grandmother ; and, blunt-spoken as she was, and with her causes of resentment against my father, she had the indiscretion to confess to him that her daughter was far from blessed in her marriage. This discovery inspired Tom with great compassion ; and from compassion his gallant nature extracted a softer sentiment. He followed my mother to Brighton, and offered the consolations of that dangerous friendship called Platonic love, in preliminary copies of verses which would have steeled against him any ear that had ever been attuned to music. A brief reply, that ought to have converted a Platonist into a Stoic, had no effect on his love and his Muse. He continued to pour in his poetry till, finding no answer returned, and the door closed upon him, he took to sentimental perambulations in the street : loitering by the threshold, like Tibullus—looking up at the windows, like the Knight of Toggenburg—while these proceedings kept their victim a close prisoner within doors.

My father joined his wife in a very ill-humour, for Brighton was not at all to his taste ; and her alarm may be well conceived, lest he should behold from the window (at which he usually placed himself in his arm-chair to read the newspaper) the sauntering figure of the gallant Tom. Nay, as she had been sufficiently unfashionable not to keep any letters she received private and apart from her husband, the postman might at any time bring one of Tom's poetical effusions, to set fire to materials which a much slighter spark would explode. To have told the Colonel—or rather the General, for that was then his rank—the persecutions of her undiscourageable innamorato, would have been cutting the Gordian knot with a vengeance. The General would not have stormed : no, he would have chucked her under the chin and called her 'good girl ;'

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but, as there was not a better shot, nor a cooler hand at the touch of a trigger, in the service of his Majesty, Tom—unless carried off by Venus in a cloud—would have been a shade beside the Styx within twenty-four hours.

In this dilemma, my mother took the best course she could adopt. She wrote to Mrs. Lytton; who, in her virtual widowhood, had had more experience in getting rid of illicit and unwelcome wooers than she, poor woman, could pretend to, and begged her to see Mr. Thomas Lowndes, and put a stop to such impertinent and continued annoyance.

My grandmother was just the person for that diplomatic commission. She wrote to Mr. Lowndes to come to town, and, on seeing him, took him soundly to task. Tom was, at first, smiling, *débonnaire*, and obdurate, till my grandmother (who did not tilt with blunt lances) smote him straight in the centre of his *amour propre*. She told him that my mother found his verses detestable; and, added she, 'I tell you fairly, Mr. Lowndes, that if ever my daughter is inclined to go wrong (which I don't think probable), she bade me tell you that you are the last person on earth that would tempt her.' Tom rose, furious, and exclaiming 'I wish Mrs. Bulwer joy of her taste in men and poetry!' *evasit, erupit!* From that time, the disciple of Plato left my mother in peace, under the protection of Juno.

It has happened to me in the course of my life to be honoured with the confidence of fashionable ladies exposed to similar persecutions; and, when they have made their complaints and wished they could get rid of their troublesome admirers, I have generally told them the above anecdote, and offered my services for their delivery from their plagues—provided I might employ the same brisk means as those which Mrs. Lytton employed upon the self-love of Tom. But the kind creatures were usually too much disinclined to inflict such pain on the feelings of the poor men, to avail themselves of my friendly proposition.

CHAPTER XIII.

(Autobiographical.)

GENERAL BULWER. 1804-1807. Æt. 1-4.

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XIII.

Æt. 1-4

I HAVE said that my father was ambitious; and 'that last infirmity of noble minds' increased upon him as he advanced in his career. It must be owned that it was not without the aliment of success. Shortly after his marriage (although he was then at an age early for such promotion, and un-recommended by conformity with the political opinions of the Government) his reputation as an officer stood so high that he was appointed one of the four Generals to whom, in case of invasion, the internal defence of the kingdom was confided.

The military district over which my father presided had its head quarters at Preston, in Lancashire: and in this post, which, as the centre of an irritable manufacturing population, was not without difficulties, the General obtained credit for the strict discipline in which he kept his men; as well as popularity for large bounty to the poor, and munificent hospitality to the rich.

Raised so high while yet in the prime of manhood, and with the anticipation of being called to command in a larger sphere of action on the Continent, a less aspiring man than General Bulwer might have found it difficult to limit his expectations in the future. And, even in case of peace, or of such inroads of his domestic enemy the gout as to incapacitate the body for due obedience to the energetic mind,

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it was not likely that he could retire to the ease of his Hall ungraced by the dignity of the peerage. He had raised two regiments for the service of his country at his own expense ; and his general claims, both of ancient family and personal repute, were higher at least than the average of Mr. Pitt's peers. He had set his heart upon being Lord South Erpingham—the name of the district in which his property was situated ; and, as he had never failed in anything on which that resolute heart had been set, so I have no doubt but that, if his life had been spared, Lord South Erpingham he would have been.¹

Meanwhile, and in due preparation for such honours, he sought to enlarge his paternal possessions to a territorial domain suited to the inheritance of the ermined representatives of our great landed aristocracy. He bought largely, and bought dearly, whatever lands were to be sold in the neighbourhood of his estates ; and, as he never consulted his ' womankind ' upon such masculine matters as his pecuniary affairs, so my mother naturally supposed such purchases to be made either from the ready money that came to him from his

[¹ The following occurs in a contemporary account of ' The Defence of the County of Norfolk : '—

' Colonel Bulwer of Heydon Hall commands the 3rd, or Midland Regiment.' (The Western was commanded by Lord Townshend, and the Eastern by Major-General Money.) ' This gentleman, during the late war, when the exigencies of the State demanded an increase of force, made an offer to Government to raise a regiment of infantry. His offer was graciously accepted by His Majesty ; and in a short time he formed, in the County of Norfolk only, a regiment of fine young men. These he brought to so high a state of discipline that, when they came to be inspected, the General declared he had never seen a finer body of men, or any who went through their evolutions in a more correct manner. This regiment was called the 106th, or Norfolk Rangers, of which Colonel Bulwer was Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant. It was destined to the West Indies, and was one of those which experienced the fury of the elements under the late Admiral Christian. In private life Colonel Bulwer is revered by his tenants as a kind landlord ; and those who have the pleasure of being particularly acquainted with him will join in the just praise of his hospitality, which he dispenses with a liberal hand.'—*The Globe*, Wednesday, February 4, 1804.—L.]

parents, or from what he could spare of his rental and his official emoluments.

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Æt. 1-4

*Mors sola fatetur
Quantula sint hominum corpuscula.*

In the midst of these dreams and acquisitions, Death smote the aspiring man.¹

He was at Heydon at the time. He had been suffering some days under one of his attacks of gout, and had taken to his bed, in which he lay amongst hoops that suspended from his body the touch of the clothes; for he could not bear even that pressure. No danger, however, was apprehended, even by himself. For my mother telling him, on the day of his death, that the doctor had ordered William to take wine, he said half jestingly, half peevishly, 'that he hoped the doctor had not recommended his own favourite old Madeira, for the bin was low, and would not last two or three years longer.' Thus saying, he turned to the wall, and asked for some tea. My mother went to prepare it, and when she returned he was in a gentle sleep. She stole from the room softly, not to disturb him. But from that sleep he never woke; within an hour from the time she left him he was no more. His favourite little spaniel, who sate on his pillow, would not quit his remains, and when they were placed out of sight in the coffin, it crept under the pall, and died.

Peace to thy dust, O my father! Faults thou hadst, but those rather of temper than of heart—of deficient education and the manlike hardness of imperious will, than of ungenerous disposition or Epicurean corruption. If thou didst fail to give happiness to the woman whom thou didst love, many a good man is guilty of a similar failure. It had been otherwise, I sincerely believe, hadst thou chosen a partner of intellectual cultivation more akin to thine own; of hardier nerve and coarser fibre; one whom thy wrath would less have

[¹ July 7, 1807.—L.]

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less moral spirit, and more physical courage. Nor do I think
thou wast aware of the unhappiness thou didst occasion ;
but, on the whole contented thyself, didst want nothing but
the delicate tact to perceive that in marriage content is not
always reciprocal. For the rest, thy courage was without
question, and thine honour without stain ; and thy tomb
closed over a true Englishman ; who, had the invader come,
would have planted a patriot's foot on the Saxon soil, or
hallowed with a patriot's blood the turf of some glorious
field. •

CHAPTER XIV.

(Autobiographical.)

THE OLD SCHOLAR. 1807-1809. ÆT. 4-6.

THE executors appointed by my father's will did not find his affairs in that flourishing state which might have been expected from the style in which he lived, and the lands he had purchased. In fact, those ambitious additions to his patrimony had augmented its acreage to the sad diminution of its income. Fatal and frequent fault that, of landed proprietors! How many families have gone to the dogs because one daring ancestor has borrowed at five per cent. in order to buy farms which yield two and a half! Would that my father had read more: read Roman history, and learned that the dying recommendation of the wise Augustus to his successor was to beware of increasing the limits of the empire: a counsel as applicable to the Squire as to the Cæsar.

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I don't doubt but that my father himself, in his acquisitions, had a soldierly eye to all the fair chances of emancipating the estate from the great debt which they laid on it. First, in case of military appointment abroad, with all its certain and contingent emoluments; next, in the probability of his surviving his father-in-law, when, if my mother should refuse absolutely to sell Knebworth, her generosity might be induced to transfer to that property a considerable share of the mortgage on Heydon. Lastly, if misgivings as to the duration of his own life crossed him, his heir might have a long minority, during which a large portion of the

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incumbrances might be disposed of. With this eye to the future, some part of the debt was made to annul in terminable annuities, and for the rest a sinking fund was provided.

My mother did as others in similar circumstances. She consulted the male friends of her family; and, acting on their advice, obtained from the Court of Chancery an order assigning to her the guardianship of her children, with an adequate allowance for their education.

The widow then settled in London, to be near her mother. William went to a famous preparatory school; Henry remained with Mrs. Lytton; so I was alone with my mother. She took a house in Montague Square, which she afterwards exchanged for one in Nottingham Place. For the purchase of her house my grandfather, who never showed himself so kind and generous to her as in that friendless epoch, made her an unexpected present of three thousand pounds. From that time, a very affectionate understanding continued between father and child, and my mother spent with Mr. Lytton a great part of every year.

The earliest of my infant reminiscences worth treasuring dates from one of these visits, and associates itself with the Scholar and his home.

My grandfather at that time lived in a house at St. Lawrence, near Ramsgate: a house of no ostentatious pretensions, but of fair size for the neighbourhood of a watering-place; a patch of garden in front, and a much larger garden behind. I should know the house well, for it was afterwards tenanted by a gentleman with whom I passed several months as a pupil. My recollection of the place, however, as it was in my grandfather's time, is indistinct. I have a confused perception of a vast number of books—of books that haunted me in every room I entered. I think they even lined the landing-place or the staircase. I cannot disentangle my recollection of the house from the presence of the books. Beyond these, I have a vague recollection of green sward and lilac boughs; no doubt

the attributes of the back garden. Types are these reminiscences of the tastes of my after life : a passion for books, and a passion for the green sward and the blossom on the bough, even though in the confines of a back garden.

CHAP.
XIV.

Æt. 4-6

Of my grandfather himself, I can just recall the visions of a short and rather stout man in black. He had been very slight in youth, but expanded in the indolence of after years. Besides the black dress, which was neat and formal, I have also an awful impression of a dignified shovel hat. I can remember, moreover, that my grandfather ate very fast, with a book beside him on the table ;¹ that he was extremely short-sighted ; that he sate in a quaint, queer-looking, and mightily uncomfortable arm-chair (which I have now), and that in his immediate vicinity there were generally two great globes on mahogany stands.

At that time, I believe, this erudite Scholar had pretty well exhausted such learning as he thought worth the achieving, and that he had become a great novel-reader ; but I think the novels were not in English. I rather fancy they were Spanish. He had a collection of books of chivalry which might have satisfied Don Quixote, and for these he had Don Quixote's partiality.

There lived then with my grandfather (who was much past sixty), and in the capacity of housekeeper, companion, *dame de ménage*, a lady at least middle-aged. I heard, when residing in that neighbourhood, that this co-residence had caused a little scandal among the gossips. I feel sure that nothing could be more unjust. And, indeed, none of the uneducated can conjecture what an indispensable necessity it is to a bookman to have some female creature about him, elevated above the rank of a mere servant ; whom he can trust with his money and his papers ; who knows in what shelf to search for a book ; who has sufficient education for an occasional interchange of idea ; and who can cheer and nurse him in those

[¹ So did his grandson in after years.—L.]

BOOK

I.

1803-11

illnesses familiar to the race of bookmen even at the time of Celsus. And if none but the brotherhood can conjecture how necessary is such companionship to the learned man, it is probably only the pure who can conceive how very innocent it may be.

As for my mother, she was pleased to think that her father would be so well attended to when she was absent; and no coarse suspicion ever chilled her friendly politeness to Miss M.

Of this lady, who, by the way, was singularly plain, I have a grateful recollection, for she gave me a very handsome domino box; whereas my grandfather gave me nothing but—hold! what he gave me shall be told later.

I suppose there was something in my mother which made those connected with her set a very high value on her affection, for she never could escape from the compliment of a jealous desire to monopolise it. Through me she was still tormented, and on me the consequences of that jealousy retributively fell.

Out of jealousy for my mother's love, my father had positively disliked me; for the same cause my grandmother took me into open aversion—an aversion unsoftened to her dying day; and my grandfather, who ought, if conscious of the future, to have welcomed and petted me, as the one of his grandsons destined to live the most amongst books, did not suffer me to be four-and-twenty hours in the house before he solemnly assured his daughter 'that I should break her heart, and (what was worse) that I should never know my A B C.' He maintained this ill opinion of my disposition and talents with the obstinacy which he carried into most of his articles of belief; and I cannot call to mind ever having received from him a caress or a kind word.

What I did receive from him the next chapter shall relate.

CHAPTER XV.

(Autobiographical.)

THE FIRST TEMPTATION. 1809. ÆT. 6.

My mother was called to town for two or three days on some business or other, and she left me with my grandfather; specially recommending me to his tender protection.

CHAP
XV.

ÆT. 6

During her absence a young midshipman came to dine with Mr. Lytton. I peeped from the staircase when they went in to dinner, and greatly admired the midshipman's smart uniform. I saw that he deposited something on the slab without the door, as he went into the parlour—something that glittered. My infant curiosity was aroused; so, when the place was clear, I stole down and approached the slab. O Mars! I remember still how thy fierce inspiration shot through my heart when I beheld the prettiest weapon—dirk, cutlass, or miniature sword, I know not what to call it—with its gleaming hilt of mother-of-pearl and gold. I hesitated not a moment; I seized the weapon and ran off with it. Whether I absolutely meant feloniously to steal it, I cannot say. Most probably. But my senses were in such delicious and delirious confusion that my memory cannot metaphysically analyse the ideas of that tumultuous hour! All I know is, that I ran off with the instrument designed for the destruction of the enemies of my country, and instinctively hid it. I cannot even recollect where I hid it. Hide it I did. Neither know I how, nor in what dreams and visions, I passed the hours (musing on that treasure, and wondering if the time could come when I might

BOOK
I
1808-11

wear it openly by my side) 'until the midshipman took his leave, and searched for his weapon. No weapon forthcoming. What on earth had become of it? Was it in the dining-room? in the library? in the entrance-hall, with the hats and cloaks? No, the midshipman was certain he had left it on the slab. The servants were questioned in vain.

'If there were a magpie in the house,' began my grandfather.

'Please your honour,' said the grim man-servant, an austere man, of a sanctified turn of mind, who had neither little ones nor bowels for them, 'Please your honour, there is a child.'

At that answer my grandfather bounded. He hurried to the room in which I was already in bed, but not asleep. Asleep, indeed, when that dagger was dangling before my eyes, and murdering sleep! He hurried in, and caught me by the throat.

'Little wretch!' cried my grandfather, 'have you stolen Mr. Somebody's cutlass?'

Now, I did not know what the word 'stolen' meant, though practically I might have done the thing. Extremely frightened by the grip at my throat and the roar in my ears, that instinct of truth which Dr. Reid asserts to be innate in the unsophisticated human mind entirely vanished, and I answered 'No.' Blush for me, O compassionate Reader! My grandfather recoiled, and at that moment a cry rose up from the menial chorus below stairs,—

'Sir, it is found; the cutlass is found!'

My grandfather said not a word more, but left the room—'to darkness and to me.' I was very sorry to hear the cutlass was found, for it was clear from that moment that the property I had established in the cutlass—and fondly hoped might be a perpetual property in the cutlass—was gone. But since it was found, there I supposed that the matter would end, and that, to use my grandfather's favourite phrase, I should be 'troubled no more in the business.' So I went to sleep as

soundly as if I had the clearest conscience in the world. I woke earlier than usual, and, the thought of my lost and dear cutlass returning to me, felt restless and mournful. The maid-servant not coming in to dress me, I rose of my own accord, opened the door, and peeped out to see if the house was yet astir. My grandfather's bedroom was opposite the one I occupied (which was, indeed, the one assigned to my mother), and as I peeped I saw that said grim, sanctimonious man-servant (I remember that the brute wore drab breeches, and never servant of mine has been permitted—nor, please the saints, ever shall be permitted—to wear inexpressibles of that carnificent and hang-dog complexion),—I saw that MAN about to enter his master's room. His right hand was on the handle of the door; in his left was something covered by his apron. The menial monster turned at the noise I made, his eye resting with horrid significance upon mine, and smiled! Smiled, I aver it!

'Master Teddy,' quoth he, 'I have something here in store for you.'

Thinking, in the credulous goodness of my own heart, that my grandfather was about to make it up to me for the loss of my beloved cutlass, by some toy of a peculiarly fascinating nature, I cried joyfully, 'What is it? Show it to me!'

The wretch smiled again; and, withdrawing the folds of the concealing apron, held up to my sight a thing I had never seen before: a thing composed of brown horrent sprigs and twigs; a thing 'ugly and venomous!'

'But,' said I, recoilingly and doubtfully, 'is that really for me? I don't think it is at all pretty. It is very like a broom. It must be for Sarah.' Sarah was the housemaid.

'It is for you, Master Teddy,' said the infernal and execrable man (O, that I could remember his name—to transmit it to the just indignation of posterity!) 'It is for you, and much good may it do you!'

So saying, he entered my grandfather's room, and closed the door.

CHAPTER XVI.

(Autobiographical.)

PRACTICAL ETHICS. 1809. ÆT. 6.

BOOK I. 1803-11 I RETURNED to my bed, 'much meditating,' as my Lord Brougham is wont classically to express himself. The toy I had seen was displeasing to the eye, but it might have in it some secret virtues. I had an indefinite idea that my grandfather was a rich and a wise man; and, as he had never given me anything yet, surely what he would now give (especially as a set-off to my beautiful cutlass) would be proportioned to the means of the donor, and the recent loss of the recipient. Nevertheless, though a child may never before have seen a birch-rod, never have tasted of its qualities, never even heard that such an instrument of torture had been invented by the barbarity of men, there is a secret, indefinable, voice at his heart, when that infernal sight is first presented to him, which is not propitiatory and dulcet, but ominous and warning. And, in spite of all my attempts to take a favourable retrospective view of the phenomenon I had beheld, instinct prophesied and nature shuddered.

Wearied with unsatisfactory and gloomy cogitations, I had just fallen into that sweet sound sleep wherein dreams are brightest and the bedclothes warmest, when I suddenly felt a sensation of cold; started, rubbed my eyes; saw all the coverings on the floor, and my grandfather bending over me, with that grisly phenomenon in his hand suspended high in the air.

The rest of my recollections vanish in pain. '*Cur infandum renovare dolorem?*'

CHAP.
XVI.

ÆT. 6

The extraordinary part of the operation I then underwent was the perfect silence with which the operator accompanied it. My grandfather did not condescend to the slightest explanation why or wherefore that new and bewildering agony descended on me. That the rose should be the emblem of Harpocrates—well, 'Kiss, and tell no tales;' but that the birch should be also dedicated to the silent god, my dear grandfather, I find no classical authority for *that*!

When I was once more alone, and had recovered the shock which my nervous system had sustained, the feeling that was strongest in me, prevailing over all sense of pain, was astonishment. Why that fate had befallen me, for what sin ancestral or my own, I knew no more than the man in the moon; nor did my grandfather subsequently elucidate the mystery—to me. When my mother returned, he had the satisfaction of informing her of the verification of his prediction as to my perverseness of character, and as to the judicious—but, alas! he feared, unavailing—means he had taken to arrest me in my evil courses. It might be yet time; I was not yet five years old.¹ Heaven grant it! But Heaven requires human agencies. He recommended the birch.

I don't know how my mother took the intelligence of my misdeeds, and their penance; but I felt my mind extremely relieved when she delivered it from the weight of its amaze—and explained to me that I had been punished because I had taken the goods of my neighbour and told a fib. The moral elucidations which succeeded to that chastisement were, no doubt, made more impressive by the remembrance of the chastisement itself. But for them, I am sure that I should have purloined the cutlass the next time I saw it, and taken care to hide it in a much safer place. Wherefore, O ye parents! take

[¹ He was six.—L.]

BOOK

I.

1808-11

care to impress what you want to convey to your children at both ends. Heads as well as tails, if you please.

I don't know, Reader, whether you will think that I have been too prolix in the recital of my infant affliction. Not too prolix if you look at it philosophically, and judge of its probable effect on my after life. For it was not only the first, but the only, flogging I ever received. And that solitary experience associates itself with the elementary principles of *meum* and *tuum*. If the rod had something to say in the respect which I venture to think I entertain for honesty and truth, I ought not to slur over too rapidly the only thing I ever received at thy hands, O my grandfather!

CHAPTER XVII.

*(Autobiographical.)*REMINISCENCES OF CHILDHOOD. 1810. *Æt.* 7. ,

BEFORE I pass to what I consider the most memorable and critical event (not excepting the aforementioned flagellation) in mine infant history, I should commemorate the first glimmerings of whatever light I may have caught from the Muse. I must have learned to read, and with facility, at an age unusually early; for I remember no time in my life in which reading was not familiar to me. It was otherwise with the art of writing; my primary initiation into which I distinctly recall. And labour dire it was, and weary woe. Very much like my ideal of the Yellow Dwarf, only older, uglier, and more malignant than that unamiable fiend, was my conductor, through the fantastic brambles of pothooks, into the wide common of round text. He was very short, he was very withered, he had a tawny complexion and a rusty wig, with vindictive eyes. His hands were never without a ruler, and my knuckles never without a rap. Odious to gods and the children of men, his garments were snuff-brown, and his name was Walker.

CHAP.
XVII.*Æt.* 7

But at least I resembled Homer in one respect. I did not find it necessary to write in order to compose; for, before the gross materialism of pothooks, mine airy soul had hovered over Hippocrene, strayed through Corycian caverns, and inhaled the fragrance of the blossoms that fell from the garlands of the vine.

O Infancy, thou Imitator! Verse fell from my mother's

BOOK

I.

1808-11

lips as the diamond and rose from the lips of her in the fairy tale. I marvelled, and I mimicked. I heard, 'The tale of Troy divine,' the deeds and death of Hector, and my soul was on fire. What though the Homer appeared to me as the Jove to Danae, not clothed with the lightning, and Lord of the Ægis, but in the soft showers into which his translator, Mr. Pope, hath melted his Olympian terrors; still the showers were gold. What could Homer have been to me if my grandfather had bellowed his *ἔπεα πτερόεντα* in Greek?

My mother's memory was rich, too, in Goldsmith and Gray, and the ringing melodies of our grand old ballads. She recited well; with a voice sweet in pathos, and not without its swell of Calliope, its *longum melos*, when the theme grew sublime with the lofty thought, or the line rolled large with the heroic deed. Nor think that the effect of these chants limited itself in childhood to the mere emulation of the sound: small would be their worth to the world, slight their influence on mankind, if they increased but the herd of poetasters and rhymsters. No, it is the ideas which they call into movement, the thoughts they wake, and the actions they guide; it is not merely the ear which they attune to the sound; it is the character which they form into a comprehension of the substances of Poetry—the Sublime and the Beautiful, to which the poet gives but the voice.

But I am soaring into the clouds, as if, Horace-like, I would strike my front against the stars, when I ought to show you a little boy seated on a stool—his own special throne—with a tapestry cover worked by maternal hands (the stool is extant still, and the designs on the tapestry still fresh¹)—a little boy there seated at his mother's knee, and looking up into her face while he murmurs out his doggerel—ah, such doggerel, doubtless! I remember that the first of my attacks on 'Gods and Columns' was in praise of King Henry V. and Agincourt. The second was of the erotic character, and

[¹ It is preserved at Knebworth.—L.]

upon the charms of a certain Miss Rose T., who was a year or two older than myself. Poets fall in love precociously; but in that poetic privilege I was a match for the best of them. At six years old, Cupid and I were already playfellows; and I declare gravely that love it was, just the love poets sing of; so timid and so happy when I sate near her; and once at blindman's buff, when she ran into my arms, I thought that the earth was gone from my feet, that we were both snatched up into the heavens. With what a beating heart I set out one day, after she went to school, to pay her a visit! and what fine things I fancied I should say when I saw her! and when we met in the cold formal parlour of the prim school, how awkward and shy I was! We stood opposite to each other, both looking down. At last she opened her pretty lips, called me Master Edward, and hoped my mamma was well. I could have beat her; but, when I got out, I was much more inclined to beat myself.

My poem, however, carefully transcribed by my mother, was sent to Mrs. T., as a paper homage to the charms of the little maid, and a token of the genius of her troubadour.¹ Mrs. T. flattered my vanity by grave compliments; and, thus encouraged, I soon learned to rhyme with the facility of an improvisatore. I regaled the ears of the maids who gathered round me in the nursery with ballads on all conceivable subjects, and they in turn sang their favourite songs to me. I remember that the lady's-maid in especial had a pretty voice, and used to say with pride that she had a sister on the stage. She taught me to sing a most lugubrious ditty, which contained these two lines (the only ones I remember):—

When wreck'd in sight of port, behold
A hapless cabin boy!

As Nature never intended me to sing, no discord, I should imagine, could have been more grating and doleful than this

[¹ See Book II. chap. ii. p. 125.—L.]

BOOK
I.
1808-11

elegiac lay, screeched out in the most mournful tones that my treble could bestow upon it.

Nevertheless, lady's-maid and all the lesser lights of the female household thought me a prodigy; and as I lay in my little crib, and they sate at work around me like the weird sisters, I used to hear them prophesy in low tones of the brilliant futurity of Master Edward. There was one legend concerning me that always came out in these vaticinations, and I repeat it because it had probably its lasting effect on my mind, and therefore reacted on my fate. Once, when I was yet in arms, a man with a wild air abruptly stopped my nurse in the streets, and, looking upon me strangely, asked whose son I was. The nurse replied that I was the son of General Bulwer.

The stranger then, with much solemnity, took me in his arms, and uttered a prophecy to the purport that I was to be greater than my father, and something remarkable. Then, hurriedly looking round him, he threw me back to the awe-stricken nurse, and darted off with such rapidity that, in telling her story in after times, she may probably have said that he 'vanished.' Poor fellow! he was mad, and had escaped from his keeper. Within half an hour afterwards, he had drowned himself. Considering he had had me in his clutches, he might have uttered a different prophecy as to my fate, and enjoyed the satisfaction, permitted to few prophets, of fulfilling his own prediction.

In all countries there is a vague belief in the second sight conceded both to the insane and to those who are on the threshold of death; so that this story, which I have sought to reduce to the primitive elements of its mythic import, passed on from nursemaid to nursemaid with all superstitious exaggerations in the transmission, till at last it settled into a kind of oracle that might have suited the infancy of a Cæsar or Napoleon. But, hummed and droned as it was into my ears as I lay, between sleeping and waking, in the little crib, per-

haps the prophecy stirred into early action my organs of Self-esteem and Ideality. For, as I never remember a time when I could not read, so I never remember a time when I had not a calm and intimate persuasion that, one day or other, I was to be somebody, or do something. It was no feverish desire of fame that preyed upon me, such as disturbs the childhood of the ambitious: it was a confidence in the days to come, which was attended with small curiosity, and never troubled by the modesty of a doubt.

CHAP.
XVII.

Æt. 7

Assuredly I have never been the great man whose image rested on the serene mirror of my childish faith. But I might have been a much smaller one if the poor maniac had never pythonised of my future in my nurse's arms. For when manhood brought me better acquainted with my powers, their scope, and their limit, the infantine belief passed into a conviction that my life had been entrusted with a mission to the hearts of beings unborn, and that in the long chain of thought connecting age with age my own being would hereafter be recognised as a visible link. Yet so acutely sensitive was my original nature that, without firm, if credulous, faith in myself and my destiny, I might long since have shrunk from a war in which the wounds were so galling, and the success so denied. With strong tendencies to indolence, with vivid capacities of joy, I might have had little of that endurance or industry which has made my career one attempt to bring into culture all such faculties of my mind as gave the faintest promise of harvest. Wherefore I must thank the prophecy; though, in exaggerating the image of my fate, it may have fostered that fault which has been commonly ascribed to me, viz. too high an opinion of myself.

CHAPTER XVIII.

(Autobiographical.)

THE SCHOLAR'S DEATH. 1810. ÆT. 7.

BOOK

I.

1808-11

BUT now comes the great cardinal event of my infancy, and, like most new epochs in history, it dates from a death.

One morning there arrived at my mother's house a grave, funereal-looking man, draped in black. I was in the hall at the time; and I heard, after the muttered colloquy between the man and the servant, the words, 'An express from St. Lawrence!'

'An express!' The word struck me as awful, it was said so dismally; and, foreboding something fearful, I stood gazing on the man in black, till my mother came hurriedly down and beckoned him into the parlour; which she had fitted up as a library, and made her usual sitting-room. Then, I saw him come close up to my mother and whisper something; and my mother fell back against the wall, and clasped her hands, and seemed in a speechless agony.

I was led, I know not by whom, from the room, in a state of mysterious terror. I escaped an hour or two afterwards, as I saw my grandmother's carriage at the door, and, creeping downstairs, entered the room behind her, unobserved. I did not hear what passed, so low were the words, until my grandmother in a clear voice said, 'My dear, you wish to break it to me by degrees, but I see it all. Poor Mr. Lytton is dead!'

My mother started back with a look of wistful reproach,

then turned away, bowed her head, and burst into a passion of tears.

CHAP.
XVIII.

Yes, my grandfather was dead. He had died suddenly, of an apoplectic seizure.

Æt. 7

His character may perhaps be guessed at by the acute, from the preceding pages; and if not more fully bodied forth, it is that the materials to judge of it which are afforded to me are scanty and imperfect. Of his extraordinary learning, there was never a doubt amongst the best scholars of his day. Of the degree of intellect which accompanied that learning, there may be a reasonable question. I should think that his abilities were good, but not first-rate. He was not without energy and passion; or he would scarcely have taken so ardent, though silent, an interest in politics. In youth he was a Utopian, and remained to the last much more than a 'Whig.' That neither in public life nor in letters did he ever give active demonstration of what was in him, may be accounted for without disparagement to his talents, granting them to be below that order which no circumstance can obscure. A small cloud can conceal a star.¹

[¹ His grandson says of him elsewhere:—'He loved learning for learning's self. He disentangled himself from the world; from pleasure, from ambition, from all the usual aspirations of a man who unites knowledge and talent to wealth and station. The image of his life was like a statue, cold in its complete repose, and shattered into fragments on his tomb. Nothing remains of it—nothing but a few notes and comments scattered here and there through remote regions and dim recesses of that silent world in which he lived unseen. Yet to me, his grandson, who with my poor acquirements, snatched from perturbed studies in the intervals of an active and unquiet life, have so boldly ventured out upon the stormy sea of popular authorship, in search of that distant haven which so few of the ships of time (as books were called by Bacon) ever reach;—to me, amidst the hum and buzz that accompanies the feeblest fame, the most fleeting celebrity,—there is something unspeakably impressive in the oblivion to which this solitary scholar carried with him all the spoils and trophies of his vast research. I shrink back from it, startled and abashed. I feel that, had I been as wise as my grandfather, I had also been as silent. I feel that there is something infinitely nobler and more august in this mute disdainful passage of the full river to the unknown deep, than in all the fretful noise with which we shallow streams go babbling over the pebbles that obstruct our course. It is greater to live for knowledge, than to live by it.'—*Letter to a friend.*—L.]

BOOK

I.

1808-11

In the first place, coming when of age into a fortune so far exceeding all his wants that his main care was rather to reduce than increase it, he wanted that spur which goads on to distinction the large majority of literary men—Poverty. And the same philosophical temper which made him despise all show and parade, and worldly learning, made him indifferent to Fame. He was a singularly shy man, and his object through life was to escape from the notice which your coveter of distinction pursues. In the next place, he was soured and depressed by the consequences of his early and ill-assorted marriage. He fled back to the world of his books, as the changeling of the Fairies to Elfin Land. The still walls opened at his touch, to close on his entrance; and in the busy haunts of men he was seen no more.

His temper, though hasty and choleric, was perhaps not originally severe; but, like a greater pedant than himself—douce King Jamie—he had high notions of discipline and prerogative, and wished to Spartanise his household. To strangers, however, he was generous, and to distress most pitiful. I have heard from those who lived in the neighbourhood of the home in which his age wore away, that he could accommodate his conversation to the average intelligence of the country squires around, and the unpretending colonisers of a watering-place, and that the conversation was most agreeable and fascinating. Therefore, though considered a great oddity, he was popular with his acquaintances, as he was beloved by the poor. Despite his early inclination to what may be called revolutionary politics, he had never any sympathy with the free-thinking philosophers of France; he was always, like his friends Parr and Sir William Jones, a sincere and firm believer in the Christian faith; and in his later years he belonged to that section of our Church which is called Evangelical. He left behind him no manuscripts to attest his erudition; no foot-track told where that eager mind had travelled across the vast wilderness of books. A few letters on private matters,

written in the slow and large characters of a hand which has taken patient notes—not rushed athwart foolscap with the haste of impromptu composition; a few copies of verses, neat and correct, but composed on the principle of modern Latin versification—that is, the avoidance of all phrases not warranted by the best authority; and some spare comments upon writers on the margins of his library catalogue, are all that on earth survive the dust and shade of the great Scholar.

But his books were removed to London. Wain and van rolled up the streets of Marylebone, and startled the doze of dowagers in Nottingham Place. You might have thought you saw ‘the carts of Zagathai laden with houses—a great city travelling towards you.’* They came, the mighty Nomads—the grand, restless race—the disturbers of all antique landmarks—the convulsers and conquerors of the globe. They came, the Souls of the Dead, file and rank, in the armament of Books!

* Rubruquis.

CHAPTER XIX.

(Autobiographical.)

THE ARRIVAL OF THE BOOKS. 1811. Ær. 7-8.

BOOK I. BEHOLD the great event of my infant life—my Siege of Troy, my Persian Invasion, my Gallic Revolution—the Arrival of my Grandfather's Books!

1808-11

The learned Deluge flowed into that calm still world of Home; it mounted the stairs, it rolled on, floor upon floor; the trim face of drawing-rooms vanished before it; no attic, the loftiest, escaped from the flood.

Piscium et summa genus hæsit ulmo,
Nota quæ sedes fuerat columbis;
Et superjecto pavidæ natarunt
Æquore damæ.

But the grand reservoir, the Lake Mœris of the whole inundation, was the great dining-room; and there, when the flood settled, I rested mine infant ark.

My mother then spent her days almost entirely either with Mrs. Lytton, who perhaps she still fancied needed soothing and comfort, or with lawyers. So the house, with all its new treasures, was given up to me. Having duly visited all the lesser, if loftier, settlements of the immigration, I finally, as I before said, settled myself habitually in the dining-room, which I regarded as the central camp of the invading hordes. Words cannot paint the sensations of awe, of curiosity, of wonder, of delight, with which I dwelt in that City of the Dead. Even now, when I think of them, I am in a fever, and grope

darkly at my meaning through all confusion and change of metaphor, and vague big words, which crumble away as I clutch at them in despair. Books I had known familiarly before; but they had been given me with reserve—taken, one by one at a time, from mahogany cases under lock and key, with cautions not to dog-ear, and an infinity of troublesome restrictions. But here I was a chartered libertine. I might throw the handkerchief as I liked. I was not married to a single volume, in a humdrum-monogynical connection. I was Solomon in all his glory, and surrounded by all his seraglio. Those Greek, and Hebrew, and Oriental, Beauties!—I lifted up their veils; but, reading nothing in their passionless faces that returned my ardour, and coaxing no reply from their lips in an intelligible tongue, I shook my head and passed on. I lingered longer with the importations from Latium; for Mr. Walker, in addition to the art of caligraphy, had taught me to decline *Musa*, and conjugate *amo*; so I thought I should know something of Latin, and tried hard to flirt with the daughters of Romulus. It was in vain; not a nymph among them warmed from her marble. I was forced to limit my amours to the children of my native land.

[The following extract from a letter written by my father, when he was still a very young man, contains a somewhat fuller account of this episode in his childhood.

Many of these books (he says) were in strange tongues, which excited in me a deep and wistful reverence. They seemed filled with wierd hieroglyphics and unearthly characters. But at length I fell upon others which I could understand: a race with which I had common speech. As he grew older, this great scholar, apparently satiated with abstract learning, had collected around him works of imagination and romance. And perhaps from his favourite book of that class, which he had read and re-read in the original (the immortal masterpiece of Cervantes), he had acquired a taste for that sort of literature which the Knight of La Mancha sought to convert into action. In his collection were numerous works upon knight-

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I.

1808-11

errantry, witchcraft, and faëry-land. Of these, the one which specially caught my fancy was Amadis of Gaul, in Southey's translation. There was much in it, no doubt, that I could not understand; but perhaps the very dimness of my comprehension increased the charm of it. Never can I forget the hours of rapt and intense enjoyment passed in what then seemed to me the large London parlour, gloat-ing over the wild feats and perilous adventures of this fabulous hero. My own enthusiasm I afterwards communicated to my brothers, when we met in the thick woods of Hertfordshire. And there we used often to perform mimic dramas of the adventures that fired our young fancies. Another book which at the same time made a great impression on me was Spenser's 'Faëry Queen.' I could not appreciate the poetry of it, and much of its wording bewildered me strangely. But it then gave me a more exquisite pleasure than I can now find in the perusal even of those passages of it which most captivate my taste. And all this time I was a child, an infant, so otherwise uninformed that I could scarcely scribble a pothook. But the seed was sown which, in a soil more fertile, might have sprung to less perishable fruit. I had learned, not only to delight in reading, but *to imagine the reality of the things I read*. It is to this early and adventurous cast of study that I ascribe the passion which has long haunted me, and haunts me still. All the romances I have written are but wild and imperfect attempts to satisfy the longings of that passion: longings which the circumstances of my life forbid me to satisfy in practice by the prosecution of a military career.

Neither the precarious health which has been my customary lot, nor sedentary habits, nor that false philosophy which sees nothing but crime in war (a philosophy whose specious dogmas I once struggled to believe), have ever out-rooted from my nature this passion for the soldier's calling. All my aspirations in boyhood turned from every other ideal of fame to this, which I was destined never to achieve. As soon as I was of age I bought a commission in the army; and, had I not married immediately afterwards, I should have sought action in foreign service. But my grandfather's library was to be sold. There came intruders on my domains. With what silent resentment did I watch them irreverently handling my mysterious treasures! Quasimodo could not have felt more acutely the insult of interference with the darling bells he was scarcely able to hear, than I felt the impertinence of abstracting the precious tomes I was scarcely able to read. Amadis and the Faëry Queen were spared; but I missed the unknown characters, the wizard pages. The island remained to me, but Caliban and Ariel were gone.]

CHAPTER XX.

*(Autobiographical.)*THE CHILD'S INTERCOURSE WITH THEM. 1811. *Æt.* 7-8.

FANCY me, again I say, fancy me alone in that vast collection, a little boy of six years or so, already consumed with the insatiable desire of knowledge, though guessing not at the nature of the desire.¹ Where I found a book in English it sufficed for me, no matter how dry and how far above my reason; I still looked and lingered—read and wondered. All variety of dim ideas thus met and mingled in my brain. Many an atom of knowledge, chipped off from the block and stored up unconsciously in the mind, was whirled into movement in later years, in the golden dance of those sunbeams, our thoughts.

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XX.*Æt.* 7-8

I must, in this way, have blundered through many defiles of Bookland, deep and abstruse. I remember that I was specially interested in a work upon calculation, which was accompanied and illustrated by a little wooden machine with round balls. I dare say I should make less of it now than I did then. I must certainly have got ankle-deep in the great slough of Metaphysics; for I remember, as if it were yesterday, after sitting long silent and musing, I addressed to my mother the following simple and childlike question:—

‘Pray, mamma, are you not sometimes overcome by the sense of your own identity?’

A hard word, identity; and a subtle sense in my question; yet sure I am that I understood both.

The sense of one's own identity! Where is the thoughtful

[¹ He must have then been between seven and eight.—L.]

And even in my wanderings from the plain *vestigia hominum* into bypaths lonely and obscure, still the knowledge I have sought has been directly related to the noblest thing I have known—the human Man with the eternal Soul. Fain would I trace his ascent in the scale of spirit, when he passes from my sight, but not from my search, behind the portals of the grave. Hour upon hour, day upon day, do I sit alone amidst my thoughts, as when, a child, I sate alone amidst the books; still, as then, absorbed in the desire to know. Still, the question that perplexed the infant occupies the man: still, in that sense of identity which comprises the perception of all things living, and with which, were it perishable, all things would perish, I find the same mystery, and receive from it the same revelation.

CHAPTER XXI.

*(Autobiographical.)*THE DEPARTURE OF THE BOOKS. 1811. *Æt.* 7-8.

BOOK I. 1803-11 THERE came a precise, cold-blooded man, who took up the books, glanced at their title-pages, and laid them down again without saying a word. I looked at him with savage eyes; I felt instinctively that his visits would end in my spoliation. And so it was. One morning my mother and I got into the carriage; we were absent two or three days, and when we returned the books had vanished.

My grandfather had left debts to be defrayed. Everyone, Heaven knows, who comes into possession of an estate long neglected, and a great country-house half tumbling down, wants ready money to begin with. So my mother sold my grandfather's library. It was said to have cost him a vast sum: it sold for a small one. The books were mostly in a bad condition; shabby and torn. Mr. Lytton seemed to have the same dislike as Dr. Johnson to a well-bound book. Moreover, volumes were missing in many of the most valuable works; and, as my poor mother could perhaps ill appreciate the worth of things whose appearance was so much against them, doubtless the bookseller who purchased got them a bargain.

A few only were retained, either as pleasant to look at, or entertaining to read: amongst them Southey's translation of 'Amadis of Gaul,' which long made the *deliciæ* of myself and my brothers. Out of the classical works in dead languages,

my mother only reserved one; and why she reserved that I cannot form the slightest conjecture. It was a very good copy of the 'Lives of the Philosophers,' by Diogenes Laertius, in the native Greek; and this book, amongst others, is settled as an heirloom on the future owners of Knebworth. Probably my mother had a subtle and wise notion that a man plagued with a property in land had need make acquaintance with philosophers.

But we set out in the carriage, while that precise cold-blooded man cleared the rooms in Nottingham Place of their poor tenants, whose time there was so short; and we arrived at Knebworth.

The house with its long outwalls, that seemed to me measureless, emerged on my view as we drove through the park. For the rest, I can only recall broken reminiscences of a deep gloomy archway, of a long gallery covered with portraits, and chambers in which the tapestry seemed rotting on the walls. More distinct than any other recollection is that of a frightened peep down a trap-door into 'Hell-hole.'

When I again saw Knebworth, the work of demolition was begun. My mother had resolved to pull down three sides of the great quadrangle, and confine the house to the fourth side, which, indeed, was sufficiently capacious for estates so diminished by former proprietors.

p. 32.

BOOK II.
S C H O O L
1812—1821

CHAPTER I.

*(Autobiographical.)*FIRST EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL LIFE. 1812-1817. *Æt.* 9.

THE first school I went to was at Fulham, kept by Dr. Rud-dock, and a Mrs. Bowen, who had more especially charge of the younger children. My mother took me down to this 'Pre-paratory Institution.' How my heart sank within me when she gave me her parting kiss, and I stood, on the strange floor, striving to stifle my tears and catch the last sound of the receding wheels! Mrs. Bowen goodnaturedly sent for two boys, not much older than myself, to spend the rest of the evening with me in the parlour, and explain the nature of the place. These boys seemed to me like fiends. Infants though they were, their language was filthily obscene, and my ignorance of its meaning excited their contempt; which they vented in vague threats and mocking jeers. The school-mistress, wishing to leave us to ourselves to make friends, sat at the other end of the room out of hearing, till at last we were sent to bed. Once in my little crib, I thought I was safe; but scarcely had I cried myself into an unquiet doze, when I was suddenly seized, dragged from bed in the dark, and carried away in the dark, gagged and bound. I knew not what was to happen to me, but had a dim idea that I was to be murdered. I was borne thus into the open air, on a cold winter's night; and, two of my tormentors laying hold of my arms, and two of my legs, I was swung against the trunk of a tree in the playground, to undergo the undulatory operation

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termed bumping. I do not remember whether I was much hurt; but if I had been, mere bodily pain would have been scarcely felt amidst the storm of terror, and shame, and rage, which made a revolution of my whole moral being. Whatever the alleged cruelties of public schools at that day, I cannot believe that they equalled the atrocity of a genteel preparatory establishment; in which the smallest boy was given up, without any check from the bigger, to the mercies of boys less small, who were yet of the age when it is a delight to mangle flies and spin cockchafers.

[In a short sketch of his earliest reminiscences, written before he began this Autobiography, my father has more fully described his impressions of what he calls 'that horrible initiation (for horrible it was to me) into the meanness, the tyranny, the obscene talk, the sordid passions, of the real world.'

For school (he adds) is the real world, only it is the worst part of it. Oh, that first night, when my mother was gone, the last kiss given, the door closed, and I alone with the little mocking fiends to whom my anguish was such glee! I was an especial and singular diversion to them, not having been brought up with other boys. My utter ignorance of their low gross slang, the disgust with which their language, their habits, their very looks, inspired me—all this was excellent sport to them. I believe I was the youngest boy in the school. At least, I was the smallest. But I had not read 'Amadis of Gaul' for nothing; and I cuffed and scratched in return for cuffs and scratches. The school hours were to me hours of relief; for I was quick and docile, and my master could find no fault with me. But when the school broke up, that hour of release, so dear to others, was regarded by me with unutterable terror. Then the lesser boys would come round me to taunt the griefs which they themselves, I suppose, must once have felt. They had nothing of which to accuse me, except that I was homesick. But in the eyes of schoolboys that is the worst offence. There I learnt betimes that, with the unfeeling, feeling is a crime: and there betimes I sought the refuge of dissimulation. To put a good face on the matter, to laugh with those who laughed, to pretend that a day or

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two had sufficed to cure all longing for my mother and my home : this was my only policy. And the attempt to practise it cost me more pain than all the tears with which, when I could steal away unobserved, I gave vent to my first sorrows. I remember now, with gratitude, one tall handsome boy who, indignant at my persecution, came up one day to disperse my tormentors. I recollect that, when he had done so, I was particularly anxious to convince him that my sufferings did not arise from fear of my tyrants. ' You see,' said I, ' that I cannot fight them all. But make one of them come out from the rest (any one of them), and let me fight him.' The boy smiled, and seemed to consider a little. At last he, very wisely, agreed to my proposal. My tormentors, however, so brave when united, were, like most bullies, no heroes when taken singly ; and, with some difficulty, a boy half a head taller than myself was induced to become the representative of the rest. I remember that I was dreadfully beaten. But I did not give in, and that was something. Unfortunately for me, my protector was high in the school, and seldom at hand ; so that his interference only increased the malice of my foes.

At last my homesickness became apparent to the good school-mistress. She was some relation to the master ; not his wife. She sent for me, and accosted me with great kindness.

' My dear,' said she (I see her now—a comely plump matron in a stone-coloured silk gown)—' my dear, life consists of perpetual separations from those we love. You pine for your mother. But you will soon see her again. Think how much harder is my fate than yours. I have lost a beloved husband. He is dead. I shall never see him more. But you see I am resigned and comfortable.'

' How long ago is it since you last saw him, ma'am ?' said I.

' More than twenty years,' said the lady.

' That is a very long time,' said I, thoughtfully, ' and when I have been twenty years at school, I dare say I shall feel as resigned and comfortable as you do at the loss of your husband.'

The good lady never attempted to comfort me again.]

I did not remain in that school above a fortnight. My misery was so great that it affected my health ; and my mother, coming to see me, was so shocked at my appearance, and at my narrations, that she took me away. But the experience I had undergone, short though it was, had no trivial effect on my character. It long damped my spirits, and chilled that

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yearning for childish friendships which is an instinct with childhood. On the other hand, it left on my mind a hatred of cruelty and oppression which, I trust, has never faded away.

I was next sent to a school at which my brother Henry was also a pupil: Dr. Curtis's, of Sunbury.¹ It was a very bad school in all ways; and there I wasted two years in learning marbles, and trying to learn the Latin grammar. My brother, being two years older than myself, was scarcely my companion, and I did not there form a single friendship. By the advice of a medical man, I was then removed, for the benefit of sea air, to Brighton—a Mr. Dempster's, on the Grand Parade. I have no recollection of any educational benefit derived from that establishment, but I grew in health and strength.² Thence I was removed to Dr. Hooker's, of Rotten-dean; one of the most celebrated academies in England for the rank of the pupils, the comforts of the school, and the superiority of its training for the great public institutions of Eton or Harrow. Here I made a leap. The place was congenial to me. The habits of the boys were those of gentlemen. I conceived a liking for the master. I applied myself willingly to his lessons. For the first time, at school, I obtained the reputation of cleverness. My early taste for English literature began to reappear. In company with other boys, I started a kind of weekly magazine for the receptacle of poetic effusions; and mine were considered the best, and looked forward to with

[¹ Some memoranda, made by my father (in 1844) for this Autobiography, contain the following references to his school life at Sunbury:—'Curtis—Games there—Prince Bulwing—Fight with Munday—Its effects—Shame and pride—Describe this school well—Playground—Habets—Haughton Codes, &c.—Carry—Sentimentality—Learning nothing—Forgetting English poetry, &c.' 'Prince Bulwing' was probably a name given him by his schoolfellows, and 'the Haughton Codes' may, perhaps, have had some reference to their games; but to 'Carry' (whoever she was) I can find no other reference in any of his recorded reminiscences.—L.]

[² Mr. Dempster's school is thus referred to in the same memoranda:—'Dempster's—playing with town boys in the square—the consequences of this—Learning nothing—Describe it—and him, in his tights and watchchains.'—L.]

interest by the school. There, I first read Scott and Byron ; greatly admiring the first, and conceding to the last a very limited approbation. I became also fond of athletic pursuits, and was esteemed the best pugilist of the school ; though I, only fought once, a boy somewhat bigger than myself, named Augustus Moreton. My victory was an easy one. During my last six months at this school, however, I suffered greatly in spirits from a dislike, then unaccountable, which Dr. Hooker had taken to me.¹ I found afterwards that Mrs. Hooker had said I lampooned her, which was not true ; but she had a son by a former marriage, who was the biggest boy of the school, and who was my personal enemy ; though I never gave him any other cause than that of saying I would not take a licking from him. Dr. Hooker wrote to my mother, advising her to withdraw me from his seminary and place me at Eton. He said, in one of these letters, 'Your son has exhausted all I can profess to teach him. His energy is extraordinary. He has a vital power which demands a large field. He has it in him to become a very remarkable man.'

[¹ The memoranda of 1844 also contain this mention of the Rottendean School:—'Hooker's—here an era—Leap in my life—calumny—its effect—my rage at Hooker—exploded at my mother's when I left.'—L.]

CHAPTER II.

(Illustrative.)

SCHOOLMASTER AND SCHOOLBOY. 1818. Æt. 15.

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DR. HOOKER'S letters to Mrs. Bulwer Lytton on the subject of her son's character at this time, certainly entitle the writer of them to the appellation of 'the Judicious Hooker;' and I am induced by their biographical interest to print some of them here, without any alteration of their spelling, which is opulent in capital letters.¹

[¹ The profuse indulgence in this orthographical luxury which afterwards became habitual to the style of his distinguished pupil may have been due perhaps to a taste formed in the first instance from example rather than precept, under the scholastic roof at Rottendean. Dr. Hooker's use of capital letters appears to be arbitrary; for there is no apparent reason why he should spell 'time' with a big 'T,' and 'mind' with a little 'm.' But it was upon an invariable principle that my father employed capital initials to distinguish the definite from the indefinite use of common nouns (*e.g.* the People, the Aristocracy), or the use of such nouns as proper names (*e.g.* Man, Mind, Matter), or for adjectives used in the sense of substantives after the definite article, as, for instance, 'the Good,' 'the True,' 'the Beautiful,' 'the Sublime;' terms of which the meaning is not expressed by the words 'goodness,' 'truth,' 'beauty,' 'sublimity.' Orthography has ever been regulated by fashion rather than principle; but I could never perceive a reasonable objection to the principle followed by my father in his use of capital letters. It is of obvious convenience to any reader not prejudiced against it. When I see adjectives spelt without capitals I am led by the printing of them to suppose they are employed for the qualification of substantives, and not as terms denoting the embodiment or personification of qualities in the abstract. My eye searches the sentence in which they occur to find the noun to which they belong. The beautiful or sublime what? Is it a man, a monument, or a mountain? The practice of the old writers, who began all substantives with capital letters, was not without advantage to their readers: and I think there is something to be urged against the modern fashion, which deprives all substantives (except proper names) of

*Dr. Hooker to Mrs. Bulwer Lytton.*Rottingdean: ¹ September 18, 1818.

My Dr. Madam,—I received your long Letter, as you call it: I say, interesting one. I did not answer it because I agree with you that there is plenty of Time for you to make up your mind on the Subject.

Your Son is as well, and as strong, and in as good Spirits, as any Boy in England. But every Day convinces me more and more that any Private School (whether mine or any other) will be perfect Ruin to him.

He has a mind of very extraordinary Compass. He has an Emulation rarely found, and an Anxiety and Attention, and Care about his Business, very uncommon. He has a physique, Force and Spirit, which defy all competition here; and all these things, so desirable, and so fitting him for a Public School, are ruin to him Here.

No Boy can controul him; and there is no comparative Emulation in a Private School, or any Improvement from other Boys,

that distinction. Benjamin Franklin, who witnessed, and disapproved, the beginning of this fashion, has made some observations upon it which are still suggestive. They occur in a published letter addressed by him (Philadelphia, December 26, 1789) to Noah Webster (the lexicographer) 'upon innovations in language and printing.' 'In examining the English books' (he says) 'which were printed between the Restoration and the accession of George the Second, we may observe that all the substantives were begun with a capital, in which we imitated our mother tongue, the German. This was more particularly useful to those who were not well acquainted with the English; there being such a prodigious number of our words that are both verbs and substantives, and spelt in the same manner, though often accented differently in pronunciation. This method has, by the fancy of printers, of late years been entirely laid aside, from an idea that suppressing the capitals shows the character to greater advantage; those letters prominent above the line disturbing its even, regular appearance. The effect of this change is so considerable that a learned man of France, who used to read our books, though not perfectly acquainted with our language, in conversation with me on the subject of our authors, attributed the greater obscurity he found in our modern books, compared with those of the period above mentioned, to a change of style for the worse in our writers; of which mistake I convinced him by marking for him each substantive with a capital in a paragraph; he then easily understood, though before he could not comprehend it. This shows the inconvenience of that pretended improvement.'—L.]

[Old-spelling for Rottingdean.—L.]

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which he could so well digest and be benefitted by in a Public one. Whoever lives to see him a man, will find his mind employed—not in the minor Elegancies of Life—but in the Higher Branches of Occupation and Ambition. He can, and he will, if led on by a Public School, highly distinguish himself there, and in after life. He is capable of extraordinary Exertion and Self Denial also, for any Object in which he is interested. But such an Object he will not find at a Private School. And, without it, his high Spirits, his Eagerness for Pleasure, and keen enjoyment of it, may prove the ruin of his character. I have, however, no more to say on this Subject, but to assure you my advice is the best I know how to give, and the most calculated for his ultimate advantage. Neither do I see anything that can properly militate against it.

I am, Dear Madam, with much gratitude for all your kind attentions.

Your obed^t. serv^t.,

T. R. HOOKER.

In a subsequent letter, he adds:—

‘I hope you will be induced to follow the Plan I have recommended. He will find at a Public School the exertion he requires, and the Opportunity of improving those abilities with which it has pleased God to bless him. Properly managed, they will make him a great, and a good man. But, if unrestrained, they will produce unhappiness to himself and misery to all around him.’

It is obvious that Master Edward was an obstreperous and somewhat unmanageable boy. In one of the hitherto unpublished fictions of his later life, which will be found (unfinished alas!) in a subsequent chapter of this book,¹ he has painted, from memory, his own portrait as a schoolboy; and the fidelity of that portrait is attested by its close resemblance to his schoolmaster’s sketch of him in the foregoing letters. The boy’s own letters, written to his mother between the ages of fourteen and fifteen, while he was still under the tuition of Dr. Hooker, are not without character; and the following specimens of them may perhaps be read with interest.

[¹ Book II. chap. xi. p. 176.—L.]

Edward Bulwer to his Mother.

Æt. 15

Rottingdean: October 22, 1817.

My dearest Mama,—I rec^d. your last letter to-day, which I am very much obliged to you for. I wrote 2 or 8 days ago, directing to Knebworth, but, as they may not send it, I write again. I can easily guess your anxiety about my Brother, as you have always been so good a mother to me, and *sincerely hope* he is better, *both for his sake and your own*. Pray, my dearest Mama, take care of yourself. I am so afraid you will catch William's fever. Pray, *pray* write soon, and tell me how you are. I am *quite well*. Pray write directly, as I shall be in Torture till I hear from you. Give my *kindest love* to my Brother, and *sincerely hoping this will find you well*,

I remain, my dear Mama,
Your most affectionate son,
E. G. BULWER.

For Mrs. Bulwer Lytton,
Upper Seymour Street, Portman Square, London.

The Same to the Same.

Rottingdean: November 2, 1818.

My dearest Mama,—I take up my Pen to acknowledge the receipt of your Kind Letter. Believe me, when I say that I truly feel for your Situation! My poor Grand Mother! I shed tears for her. For, although she certainly has not been a good Parent to me, Yet at such a time Everything is forgotten, and only her Good Qualities remembered. But I hope and trust in the Mercy of God to restore her to health. 'While there is Life, there is Hope,' and I hope everything is not so bad as you imagine. Affection (like Jealousy) has an 100 eyes, and no doubt y^r filial love for my G. M. has led you to see things in a worse Light than they really are. May the Almighty grant it thus! And when I return Home for the Holidays, may I see her, *and you*, in perfect Health! I am pretty well. My Cold has gone off. I have got a pair of Corderoi breeches and a p^r of black cloth, as the Dr. said I had better have two pair. Were I not aware of the importance of your Time, I would send you a small Ode I have composed in

BOOK II. imitation of Milton's 'Allegro,' upon a Poker. I will, however, no longer intrude upon Time so precious, and shall only add that I am, and always shall remain,

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Y^r most affect^d Son,

Where shall I be next Holidays ?

E. G. BULWER.

To Mrs. Bulwer Lytton,
Upper Seymour Street.

The Ode to the Poker was published, not many years after the date of this letter, in a little volume, of which more anon.

The Same to the Same.

Bottingdean (undated).

My dear Mama,—I received your very kind parcel of Fruit quite safe, and am exceedingly obliged to you for it. Indeed, my dear Mama, I do not know how to return your very great kindness. The grapes, peaches, &c., are Excellent, and so, indeed, is every thing which comes from you. I am very much rejoiced to hear my G. Mother is better, and (believe me) sincerely hope she will in a short time be restored to Health. Pray take care of your own Health. Mrs. Lake is at Brighton and is much better.¹ The T.'s come to Brighton on the 16th. They know a Boy here, and are going to take him Home of # Saturday till Monday. This fellow told them I was here, but I don't know if they are going to take me. I am very much obliged to you for your kind advice, which I assure you I will follow. I must now conclude with saying that I am, and always shall remain,

Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

E. G. BULWER.

The Miss R. T. mentioned in a preceding chapter² as the young lady Master Edward fell in love with when he was six years old, appears to have died about this time. For a letter written by the boy to his mother in 1819 ends thus:—

[¹ My father mentions, in his correspondence, that he was at school with Sir James Lake; whose promise was, he says, 'in boyhood, brilliant, but it came to nothing.' I gather from some of this gentleman's letters to my father, that when my uncle, Henry Bulwer, was Minister at Madrid, he was on the point of joining him there in the capacity of private secretary, but it this also 'came to nothing.'—L.]

[² Book I. chap. xvii. p. 97.—L.]

I have no more room on this sheet, as I am going to favour
 you with my verses, than to say how truly I am your most affect-
 son,

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Æt. 15

E. G. LYTTON BULWER.

On the Death of Miss R. T.

Why check the tear for her, whose op'ning bloom
 Glow'd like the flow'r that blossoms o'er the tomb ?
 Like that, the fragrant loveliness it gave
 Shew'd but how near is Beauty to the grave.
 Why check the tear for her ? and why deny
 The rightful tribute of the pitying sigh ?
 Mourn'st thou not her who, had'st thou died as she,
 Would, in her gentleness, have mourn'd for thee ?
 Mourn'st thou not her, who died while yet the hand
 Of Hope was pointing to the Future's land,
 And shewing blessings brightly pictured there,
 That faithless Fancy woo'd her soul to share ?
 And well on her might every blessing fall,
 Who, in her purity, deserved them all !
 Mourn'st thou not her ? No ! rather mourn for those
 Who trac'd her life of Beauty to its close,
 Who fondly mark'd, from childhood's earliest hour,
 Each bud of Virtue bursting into flow'r,
 And, when they hoped those virtues might repay
 Their anxious culture, mark'd them swept away.
 Ay, weep for those alone ! or wherefore weep
 That toilsome life has melted into sleep ?
 To sleep ? To death ! It boots not which, to her
 Whose angel soul scarce knew the way to err.
 To us that soul in that fair form was given
 Like the bright dewdrop that descends from heaven :
 Shrined in the bosom of the blushing rose,
 To the young sun awhile its splendour glows,
 But as advance the waning hours of morn
 Up to that heaven again, exhal'd, 'tis borne. E. G. L. B.

You see, my dear Mother, that there are two or three little im-
 perfections in it, which want the last polish. But from the very
 short time in which it must have been written, the head could not
 have corrected what flowed so immediately from the heart. Adieu.
 E. G. L. B.]

CHAPTER III.

(Autobiographical.)

LAST EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL LIFE. 1818. Æt. 15.

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I QUITTED Dr. Hooker's school, and it now became a question whether or not I should go to Eton. For my part, being older in mind and appearance than my years, I considered myself too much of a man to go to any school whatever. I had formed in my head the much more agreeable picture of a domicile with a private tutor; where one might leap at once from Master into Mister, from the big boy into the young man, dine out in the neighbourhood, and find a Beatrice or a Laura in some young beauty capable of appreciating my precocious susceptibility to the charms with which a boy's imagination already invested the vision of her destined apparition. In fact, I had premature but impassioned aspirations to launch into the real world of men, instead of retrograding to the mimic world of boys at any school, public or private. Nevertheless, my mother and I, early one morning, paid a visit to Dr. Keate, head master of Eton. I remember that he came out of his breakfast-room with his mouth full of roll; and that, while answering my mother's queries as to the form I could be placed, or the house I could be lodged, in, and listening respectfully to her assurances of my extraordinary abilities, he politely requested me to make a few sapphics upon spring. I remember that he praised them highly, which must have been unmerited courtesy on his part; for though I afterwards wrote prose, both in Greek and Latin, with much fluency, I never succeeded

in the verse of those dead tongues : a circumstance which will, no doubt, make the pupils of public schools consider me but an indifferent scholar. The praises did not, however, soften me, ungrateful as I was. I still retained my dislike to a public school ; and I argued the matter with my mother so convincingly, that our visit ended without other result than a sight of Dr. Keate and a survey of the lions of the town.

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I do not know whether or not to regret this decision. I am very sensible of the advantages which follow in life, especially in public life, from a probation at one of our great National Schools. I have often found the want of it in a certain distaste to discipline and co-operation with others ; and that kind of shyness, when thrown in company with contemporaries of very familiar social manners, or addicted to the sports of the field, which is seldom the defect of one reared at a public school. Always, throughout my career, I have been too thin-skinned and sensitive : faults which Eton might have cured. On the other hand, I was at that time too far advanced for a *début* at a school : too far advanced, not only in 'my studies' for the highest class to which, according to custom, I could have been assigned, but too mature in my sentiments and modes of thought. I had never been flogged ; and, after my first two or three years of school, I had never submitted to a blow from any of my companions. In every schoolboy fight I had come off victorious. Thus, something of arrogance, and certainly of the pride which attaches itself to personal dignity, had become interwoven with my nature ; and I am certain that, if I had been flogged by a master or fagged by a boy, it would have produced an injurious consequence on my health and character.

Now came the question of a private tutor. How prodigiously we were embarrassed in the selection ! What a number we saw ! What a number we rejected ! At length, as time rolled on, and my mother perceived that I only kept up my literary acquisitions by devouring the contents of three

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circulating libraries, the affair was cut short; and I went to a receptacle for young men, near London, until at last the proper Phoenix of a tutor could be discovered.¹ Here, I fancy, I was the best classical, certainly the best Greek, scholar; but then, on the other hand, I was the worst caligrapher and the most blundering arithmetician. Indeed, I had never learnt arithmetic, beyond a weekly lesson which I had always contrived to shirk; and I am sure my writing proved the truth of honest Dogberry's assertion, 'and came by nature.' I soon, however, conquered the mysteries of figures. As to the noble art of penmanship, that was unattainable, and my franks* are yet the admiration of collectors of such autographs.

I did not, alas! long continue in this intermediate state. I had a quarrel with the usher about making a noise; the usher fetched the master; the master was choleric; he became still more so at finding that his choler did not influence me; he gave me a box on the ear. I threw myself back in a pugilistic attitude; and the master, retreating, for no glory was to be gained by the contest, requested me to walk into his study. There immured, with a swelling and indignant heart (it was the first blow I had received unavenged from man or boy since the age of ten) I spent two tedious days. No companion visited me, save the servant with my meals or the coal-scuttle; no book cheered me save a volume of Beloe's 'Sexagenarian,'² which was lying on the sofa, but which, being soon remembered, was, with the usual didascallic malice,

[¹ In one of the autobiographical memoranda already mentioned, Hamerton is referred to as the locality of this school. But Hamerton is fifty-one miles from London.—L.]

* This part of the memoir was written while an M.P., and before franking was abolished.

[² Beloe's *Sexagenarian, or the Memoirs of a Literary Life*, is the posthumous work of a clergyman who was born at Norwich, and was a pupil of Dr. Parr's. My father would seem to have taken from this book the title given by himself to his Autobiography. The unpleasant circumstances of his first introduction to Beloe's *Memoirs* would have naturally recurred to his recollection when he began to contemplate the composition of his own; and it is possible that he may have owed something to the influence of the book, which abounds

summoned away before I had got through fifty pages. My master wrote to my mother, and so did I. My letter was incoherent and vehement—worthy of a Paladin. A blow—at my age—to one of my ancient birth! My ancestry was invoked with the spirit of a Roman. On the third morning the well-known carriage and its stately, long-tailed, horses stopped at the gate. I hailed it from the window. The door was unbolted: my mother entered. Scarcely time for a word, before in marched the Pedagogue, grim and tall, sullen and majestic. All attempts at reconciliation were in vain. I demanded the first apology. The master, very properly, refused to give it; and, very improperly, put himself into a violent rage. The scene was admirable. It ended by a proof of that spirit of quiet decision with which I have often in later life got out of difficulties. I opened the door, walked through the garden, reached the gate, and ensconced myself in the carriage. What more could be said or done? The affair was settled. So ended my schoolboy days. I now entered prematurely into youth—its sufferings, its memories, its adventures. The stream was crossed, the bridge broken for ever. With what wistful eyes, with what bitter regrets, have I looked back on the irrevocable shore!

in curious gossip about all sorts of literary characters (Mary Wollstonecraft among others) and in literary criticisms rather dogmatically pronounced, though not without occasional flashes of a certain kind of quaint humour.—L.]

CHAPTER IV.

(Autobiographical.)

LIFE AT EALING. 1819. ÆT. 16.

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A FEW weeks afterwards, I was placed under the roof of a very different preceptor, at Ealing. The Rev. Charles Wallington was an amiable type of the old school of Oxford man. He was a Tory, and High Churchman to the backbone. He took his principles in State and Theology without much examination, as part and parcel of his natural character as clergyman and gentleman. His scholarship was not devoid of taste and elegance, but without depth or range. He could not have fitted an aspiring genius for a first-class at Oxford; but, at least, he could have assisted a pupil of ordinary capacities towards a respectable degree. Long habit had made him familiar with the ordinary classics, Greek and Latin. He did not wander voluntarily out of those beaten tracks. His acquaintance with modern literature was limited; but he wrote in his native tongue with neatness and some grace—wrote like an educated gentleman. Gentleman, indeed, he was *emphatically*, in impulse and in habit, in appearance and in manner.

He was a very handsome old man, with an air more martial than priestly, extremely slight but sinewy, upright as a dart. He wore his black coat buttoned to the throat. Never once did I see a button relaxed; and the coat was padded across the chest like a life-guardsman's. He had a magnificent aquiline nose, almost as large as the immortal Wellington's, but much more delicate. He had blue eyes of great sweetness

when pleased, and great vivacity when angry; and a physiognomist would have detected refinement of sentiment in the curves of the mouth. Despite his age, his countenance was free from the lines of care and sorrow; his complexion was clear and brilliant. If you had put on him such a wig as was worn by George IV., he would have seemed in the prime of manhood; but though he was vain of his good looks, he did not affect youth. He wore a very becoming toupet in large Brutus-like curls; but the colour of the toupet was snow white. His height varied, growing gradually taller, perhaps, for weeks, and then some morning he appeared at breakfast suddenly shortened by a couple of inches. This arose from a peculiarity in his habits. Not liking new boots (who does?), it was his custom to appropriate to himself the boots of his second son—a handsome man in a crack regiment, who was sure to have boots well made, and who resigned them to his father after they had lost their first uneasy freshness. The son's feet were larger than the sire's; and, in order to make the boots fit better, Mr. Wallington senior stuffed them every morning with the letters he had received that day. In those boots he kept the correspondence which a less ingenious man would have devoted to the waste basket. This process went on till the boots could hold no more; they were then suddenly emptied, and Mr. Wallington senior diminished proportionately in stature. The boots were not the only things my tutor had appropriated from his son Clement. He took also from that favoured son an old grey charger; a stately and venerable animal. And every day, unless the weather was actually stormy, the old man paraded this war-horse along the highways—his chest thrown back, his seat military, his air collected and stern. Every passer-by, ignorant of his real attributes, mistook him for a general in the Peninsular War. He had one companion in these rides; an ugly, yellowish Scotch terrier. If his son Clement were the object of his pride, the Scotch terrier was the object of his love. Sometimes,

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by forgetfulness, he left this poor dog in the pupil-room, and pounce on the poor dog went the pupils. No favourite with them was that dog; and they knew they must make the most of their time, for very soon was heard the old man's tremulous step hurrying backward along the corridor. An instinct warned him of the woes that were befalling the faithful but unpopular animal; and it always went to my heart to see the pathetic, suspicious, wistful glance which he cast round the room (all the tormentors were then at their desks, looking as innocent as hypocrites generally do), while the dog bounded towards him and then rushed through the open door. This dog was not more a favourite with servants than pupils; and, perhaps for that reason, even on Sundays the vigilant, tender master did not like to leave the animal at home. The dog went regularly to church with him, paced up the aisle demurely, mounted into the reading-desk, and assisted afterwards in the pulpit. Perhaps the old man loved the dog the more because he seemed to have little happiness in the other ties of his domestic life. His wife and he quarrelled from morning to night; he had no daughters; his two sons were in the army, and rarely visited him. He seemed to have no friends. I never heard him speak of any. To the man thus circumstanced a dog was necessary; otherwise the heart might have suspended its functions. Alas! he must have long survived that Scotch terrier. I hope he found another one, for he lived till he had passed his ninetieth year.

The character of our small society was unusually quiet. The pupils were sober and steady enough, except when the dog was to be teased. We had each our own bureau, purchased with our own money. It was a matter of emulation which should have the handsomer one. In the evening each was set apart, occupied with his own studies or amusements. Our desks were as our separate homes.

I loved my preceptor, who imagined me a genius. I loved my companions. And you, my dear old oak bureau, strewn

with books, and literary litter. Ah, who owns you now? Who succeeded to that quiet corner by the snug fireside, and the door opening on the garden close at hand? I would give your weight in gold to possess you once more; you, on whose unconscious surface were written my first attempts at something more than childish rhyming, my first outpourings of love. Satirist and politician though I be, I think I should never write another harsh or ungentle line were you once more the companion of my studies.

With this excellent old man I made rapid progress in the classics; and, what was more, in the love of letters. I read every book I could lay my hands upon; no matter how trifling, no matter how abstruse, the volume. Mr. Wallington was an ardent politician, and Sir Robert Peel was his idol. He never forgave Canning the Catholic question. Sometimes he read to us aloud the Parliamentary debates, and he infected us betimes with the passion for public affairs. It was a favourite plan with him (and an admirable one, since we were not to be only readers of books all our lives) to induce us to excite ourselves and our comrades by speaking and discussing aloud, in full conclave, long extracts from Demosthenes, or compositions of our own, either in English or a less familiar tongue. For my part, I caught from this practice quite an oratorical mania, and mouthed out declamations with the enthusiasm of an embryo Gracchus. But my aspirations at that time were poetical rather than political. My mother had shown, with pride, to my preceptor some boyish verses of mine; on the strength of which he encouraged me 'to cultivate the Muse.' I needed no such encouragement to persuade myself that

Ich auch war in Arcadien geboren.

Poor Horace was robbed of all his classic turns, and my beloved Euripides poured into vernacular verse. Then did I conceive, *audax omnia perpeti*, the Homeric epic of the 'Battle of Waterloo,' beginning, if I remember right, with 'Awake

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my Muse!' and then did I perpetrate the poem of 'Ismael: an Oriental Tale,' beginning, Byron-like, with ' 'Tis eve,' &c., and thronged with bulbuls and palm-trees. In short I was a verse-maker, and nothing more. But my efforts pleased my tutor. He persuaded my mother to publish a little volume of these versifyings. The sale was even smaller than the volume. But—

A book's a book, although there's nothing in 't :
'Tis something still to see one's name in print ;

and among my mother's friends I was regarded as a youthful prodigy. Moreover, about this time Dr. Parr deigned to write to me, and was very kind in his encouragements. This passion for verse-making was unfortunate. It carried off the natural eagerness and tenacity of a mind always restlessly active, into very unprofitable channels. It divided the ardour of knowledge, and it made me absent and dreamy. There was nothing in the tuition I received to elevate my ambition towards higher objects, or stimulate it to sterner efforts. My tasks were easy and monotonous. They cost me no trouble ; nor did the acquirements or assiduity of my companions inspire me with serious emulation. Mr. Wallington lived not far from London, and there, chiefly, I passed my vacations. I was tall and manly for my age ; prodigal of talk, full of high spirits, gay to overflowing ; ready alike in verse and compliment. Women smiled on the young poet. Invitations showered upon me. My mother yielded to the flattery so sweet to a mother's heart ; and, whilst little more than a child in years, I was introduced into the world as a young man. Dinners, routs, and balls diverted me from serious study. I was passionately fond of dancing, and amongst the last to leave the ball-room by the light of dawn.¹

[¹ On March 5, 1820, Mr. Wallington, the tutor, writes to Mrs. Bulwer Lytton, 'Mr. Bulwer regularly attends Mr. Macfarren twice a week, and practises, before me, the quadrille steps ; which I trust he does from the best motive, knowing that it is your wish. Since you brought him back to Ealing, and the serious conversation I then had with him on this point, I have never heard

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The middle-aged ladies took me home in their carriages, for I was but a boy. The young ones did not disdain me as a partner—for I was almost a man. In fact, I forestalled the natural growth of years : and, enjoying my youth too soon, I renounced its tastes when I should have commenced them. At the age of twenty-two, I hated balls as much as they are hated by most men of twenty-eight. For experience, which is time, had advanced me six years in the progress to satiety. All this might have destroyed in me for ever manliness and depth of character, but for the sorrow in which it closed. Woe is me even now, when I recall the gloom wherein my boyhood vanished ! •

[A friend kindly interested in the subject of this work has brought to my notice some private autobiographical reminiscences of the early life of the Rev. C. J. Barkley, late Vicar of Little Melton, in Norfolk ; who died in 1883, at the age of eighty-four. Mr. Barkley's reminiscences were written in his latter days, at the request of his family, and with the encouragement of my friend, who wished him to put on record the salient features of a generation widely different, in many respects, from our own ; and the concluding portion of his narrative, penned only a few months before his death, contains an account of the establishment and character of Mr. Wallington, to whom he went as a pupil four years before my father, in the year 1816. It is singular that a person without any kind of celebrity, who did not become a tutor till he was long past middle life, and who never had more than six or seven pupils at a time, should reappear in autobiographies by two of his pupils. The similarity of the impressions of Mr. Wallington's character which may be gathered from these independent descriptions of it, attests the fidelity with which its peculiarities were preserved in the recollection of their

him express any aversion to it. Fencing, as you know, was always congenial to his taste, and from the attention he pays to Mr. Angelo, and Mr. Angelo to him, I have not the smallest doubt that he will speedily become a most skilful and graceful fencer.'—L.]

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writers : and I am glad to have the permission of Mr. Barkley's family to publish here his vivid sketch of Mr. Wallington, not only because it confirms and completes my father's, but also for its intrinsic interest as a specimen of vigorous portraiture written from recollections sixty-seven years old, at the age of eighty-four.

Having mentioned that from Bath, where his family resided, he travelled to Ealing with Penruddock, a pupil of some standing at Mr. Wallington's, Mr. Barkley thus proceeds :—

We drew up in front of a massive old-fashioned arched door in a high brick wall, above which nothing but the chimneys and projecting gables of the attic windows of Mr. Wallington's house were visible. It was a large, ancient, time-worn edifice, in which the lord of the manor, or other great man of the parish, might be supposed to have lived in the reign of William and Mary, or Queen Anne, but it had been disfigured by a mean-looking brick building tacked to its northern side, possibly by its present proprietor. From this house Penruddock returned with a gentleman who differed so completely in appearance and manner from any other I had seen engaged in the work of education that, when he held out his hand to me, and expressed his satisfaction at making my acquaintance, I could hardly bring myself to believe that this was Mr. Wallington. He ushered us in, not by the somewhat stately hall door which directly faced us, but by a door in the middle of the ugly annex, and which opened directly into an apartment. 'This, Barkley,' he said, 'is our lecture-room.' It was also our dining-room, and we soon sat down with Mr. Wallington to an excellent dinner, and as such a just sample of the whole series which followed. Instead of rising from the table directly we had done eating, and hurrying out of the room, Mr. Wallington encouraged us to take our time while a meal lasted, and generally remained talking with us a while after it was ended. And these social conversations, though mainly the promptings of good nature, were conducive to what was then a peculiar mode of school government. Floggings and canings he discarded entirely. Neither could my fellow-pupils nor myself recollect his ever saying a harsh word to, or of, anyone, except of William Cobbett, or Orator Hunt, or some other demagogue who attempted to increase the discontent of the lower orders and goad them on to revolution.

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Dinner over, I made a survey outside the house, and found that, although the wall which surrounded the entire premises enclosed ground enough for a market garden, the part to which the pupils had access was probably smaller than the smallest cottage garden in the parish. On my asking Penruddock to explain this strange state of things, he shrugged his shoulders and replied, 'I can only say that the garden, like almost everything else, is Mrs. Wallington's, or at any rate is called hers;' and I myself, if asked for an explanation now, could give no better. However, though we had no playground on the premises, we had an excellent substitute in a small neighbouring common, extending to thirty acres or more. On our return indoors, Penruddock showed me a second room on the ground-floor, which was the playroom of the pupils, and remarked with a sigh that he and the senior pupils regretted (especially when preparing for lectures) that the junior pupils had not a room of their own. It struck me that in the adjoining house, with its thirty or forty windows, a room might surely be spared for the purpose, but my companion exclaimed 'that it was not a thing to be thought of.' The house, as well as the garden, was Mrs. Wallington's. She had still another privilege in a comfortable exemption from all the labours which attach to a schoolmaster's wife; these were discharged by a middle-aged widow woman.

Punctually at six, Mr. Wallington sat down with us to tea, and, when the tea-things were cleared away, withdrew to what we called 'his lodging next door.' At half-past eight he returned and joined with us in a service of prayer and praise to God. At ten we lighted our candles and retired to rest.

I was not long in discovering that Mr. Wallington was not the scholar I had hoped to find him. Not only had he no objection to our preparing our lessons by the help of English translations, but at lectures he used a like 'crib,' and, even with its assistance, failed, as often as not, to explain the grammatical structure, or throw light upon the meaning, of some passage in Sophocles or Thucydides that had baffled Gore, by far the most advanced student of our lot. Nevertheless, by being always at his post, in cheerful readiness to take his share in our tasks, he kept us up so well to our work that there was no falling off in our previously acquired knowledge of Latin and Greek.

My time at Ealing for another reason was not wasted, for in Mr. Wallington we had always before us the example of one who, in principles as well as manners, was a gentleman in the best sense of

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the word : courteous in bearing, pleasant in speech, with patience, fine temper, and a tender regard for the feelings of others. Of his birth and lineage not even Fagge, who had been several years at Ealing, could tell me anything. I must not omit to say a word or two of his dress, which at first surprised me. There was nothing, perhaps, that a clergyman off duty or unattached might not becomingly wear, and yet none the less it had the same effect, and was nearly the same in fact, as that which was commonly worn by elderly country gentlemen who employed *good* tailors. 'The resemblance, I think, would most strike those who saw him taking his daily exercise on horseback. On Sundays, especially when called upon to officiate in church, his dress was strictly canonical.

Mr. Wallington had two sons in the army, Charles and Clement, both captains by purchase, one in a dragoon regiment then stationed in India, the other (Clement) in the 10th (or Prince of Wales's Own) Hussars, the most fashionable and expensive regiment in the service. Now, the price of their first commissions, the cost of their outfit, the money paid for their promotion to the successive grades of lieutenant and captain, together with the large sum lodged in official custody to insure their future advancement to the rank of major, must have amounted, on a moderate calculation, to 6,000*l.*, probably to more, and by the total loss of interest on this large sum, Mr. Wallington's income must have been considerably diminished. Nor was this all. For whereas in the infantry it was not easy for a captain to live on his pay, in the cavalry it was next to impossible, and though Captain Charles, with his Indian pay and emoluments, might dispense with his father's assistance, it must have been necessary to supplement Clement's pay with an allowance. And just at this time he was newly returned from the Waterloo campaign, impoverished by the loss of two horses killed under him, and by irreparable damage done to his gorgeous equipments. Here, I think, we have the answer to the question which often suggested itself : 'What could have induced Mr. Wallington to turn schoolmaster?' He did it to obtain by his own labours the means of gratifying his sons without diminishing the home comforts ; and certainly as regards Mrs. Wallington the end was accomplished, since she had her house and garden in their integrity, her carriage and horses, her coachman and gardener in one, and was free from all the fatigues of her husband's calling.

Clement, I suppose, had not yet supplied himself with fresh chargers, for he repeatedly borrowed his father's 'Bonnie Lass,'

formerly a favourite hackney of George III., for whose service she had been specially trained, and, in order to protect him against sudden assaults, had been taught to rear and trample down anyone who put out a hand to seize her bridle whenever she had a rider on her back. This she attempted with a private in the Foot Guards the only time I ever mounted her. The man escaped by stepping forward to clutch my stirrup strap instead of trying to get out of the way, and, strange to say, the first words the veteran uttered were, ‘ Old Bonnie Lass, is this you ? ’ He had made acquaintance with her some years before while in garrison at Windsor. How she came into Mr. Wallington’s possession I do not know. The story ran that Queen Charlotte, a lady of frugal mind, had sold her husband’s stud as soon as his malady had reached the stage that there was no hope that he would ever mount horse again.]

CHAPTER V.

(Illustrative.)

FIRST ESSAYS IN AUTHORSHIP. 1820. Æt. 17.

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[THERE is a letter preserved in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, from Lord Byron, when he was a boy, to his aunt; whom he asks to excuse its faulty orthography because it is the first letter he has ever written. Those who have read it with an interest reflected on its sprawling pothooks from the subsequent fame of its writer, will understand why I here interrupt this Autobiography in order to add to it some particulars about the volume of early verses mentioned by my father in the preceding chapter. Perhaps one source of the enjoyment with which we read even the most trivial records of the childhood of illustrious men is derived, unconsciously, from a momentary suspension of our sense of the intellectual disparity between them and ourselves. We have acknowledged or disputed their supremacy as men. But as men only we have known them: men in whom we recognised our rulers or our rivals. Death turns them to statues. The common path leads up to their commanding images, which stand above it like monuments that serve as milestones, marking the world's progress. But by the biographies which present these illustrious persons for the first time to our imagination in their character as children, we are placed at once upon a footing of early and tender intimacy with them, and, as it were, in the relation of their elders and superiors in experience.

ISMAEL

AN ORIENTAL TALE

WITH

OTHER POEMS

BY

EDWARD GEORGE LYTTON BULWER

*Written between
the Age of Thirteen and Fifteen*

was published by Messrs. Hatchard in the year 1820.

Probably no famous poet or novelist has ever derived from all his works put together a single moment of enjoyment comparable to the delicious sensations with which he first beheld his own manuscript in print. Every imaginative writer has some reason to recall his first publication with feelings akin to those which endear the recollection of a first love. To the author the book first published, as to the lover the face first loved, in early youth, differs ever afterwards from all others; for was it not the source of exquisite emotions which no subsequent experience in authorship, or love, can resemble or renew? Insignificant, commonplace, uncommonly, it may have been to every eye but his own; but to him the first radiant apparition of it was

Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars.

And even the dim remembrance of that apparition is clothed by memory in

Golden exhalations from the dawn.

Such sensations must be all the more exciting when they are experienced at the age of seventeen; and the juvenile author of 'Ismael' was naturally reluctant to forego the luxury of publication when encouraged by his tutor to enjoy it. The following letter to his mother is characteristic.

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Ealing: April 2, 1820.

My dearest Mother,—I seize the earliest opportunity of writing to you, to express my hopes that you are now perfectly recovered; which, whenever you will favour me with a line expressing as much, will give me y^e greatest pleasure.

As I refrain from my daily walk to write to you, I shall have leisure to state my Reasons for wishing my Poems to be published; and can only say that, should they not meet with your approbation, I shall endeavour to think no more about it,—as, independent of the high idea I entertain of your Sense and Judgement, I shall always hope, that my affection for you will prompt me to follow your advice.

In y^e first place, I must observe that I certainly intend publishing at some period of my life. Probably when I go to College. But it will be far more advantageous for me to publish *now*, as my extreme youth would be my Passport. For the World, which generally requires some external Recommendation to take up a Book, would be far more anxious to see poems (particularly tales in verse) written by one at so early a period, than if they were to make their appearance at a more matured age. Any faults *then* committed, would be noted and criticised; *now*, however, they would be overlooked. My Youth, like the shield of Ajax, will ward off those darts which, at a later age, can meet no considerable Resistance or Obstacle.

And, generally speaking, the Public Critics are very favourable to early writers. Dallas, in whose works there is certainly no peculiar Merit, is an instance of this.

Again, if I give productions to the public written at 20 or so, should they be disliked, no other work, however good, would afterwards be received. But, were I to publish *now*, should my book be unfavourably received, no detriment to a future publication would ensue. A Person would naturally say, 'However bad this Author writes now, still it is impossible to give a judgement what he may produce when his taste and style are refined and matured.' In the Law, or any other profession I may embrace, or even at College, it will be of the greatest assistance to me. It will give me a passport, not only to the best company (to which, independently of that, your connections and my rank would entitle me), but what is far more rare, and to me more valuable, the first literary society. When to these are added the Fame I might get, the fair Prospects it might, if successful, open to me, I think you will incline to my side, of a public printing being preferable to a private one. But, indeed, it

would be *almost private*, as the very few copies that are printed would be almost all circulated among our own acquaintance, and, should we change our opinions, it would be perfectly Optional whether we should print off Another Edition or let the whole affair go to sleep after the sale of the first.

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V.

Æt. 17

I might suggest many other reasons to you for their Publishment, but they will most probably suggest themselves equally to y^rself. Should these remarks, however, not meet with your approbation, and should your superior judgement and knowledge of the world induce you to think the contrary, I shall submit without bestowing another thought upon the subject : knowing that, however averse to my Wishes, and destructive of my Hopes, it will be intended for my advantage. And, with every good and dutiful wish, I am, my dearest Mother,

Your most affectionate son,

E. G. L. BULWER.

On the subject of this letter Mrs. Bulwer Lytton appears to have addressed her son's tutor, Mr. Wallington, who thus replied :—

Ealing: April 13, 1820.

Dear Madam,—When the Person brought your first letter early on Wednesday morning, I was so engaged that I could not write in a manner that I thought would be satisfactory to you ; and therefore your Son, in his eagerness, wrote the Note you mention, and probably omitted to say that I was decidedly for their publication. I have written to Mr. Hatchard on the Subject, and you would have my letter to-day, had you not left Town. I have shewn the Poems to two intelligent friends of mine, who all agree that they are extraordinary productions for so young a mind, and who by all means recommend their publication. To suppose that the eye of Criticism will not find out imperfections, is what cannot be expected ; but the more candid cannot but be pleased with such early Specimens of poetical genius. They display talents rarely observable in an equal degree at such an age ; and breathe the language of Poetry, with an unusual degree of discretion in the application of it. In my Preface, my object was to meet objections that I know have been made to early publications of young authors, rather than to give my candid opinion of the Poems themselves. And in doing this, I cautiously avoided running out into general extravagant praise ; as Puffing in

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all directions I consider to be unworthy of an ingenuous mind, and generally subversive of y^e intended end. The character I have given is what I think they fairly merit; and it is such, I conceive, that an Author of much more mature years would be happy to have stamped upon his works. I can readily perceive, and indeed I have perceived it, that in the enthusiasm of affection which first productions naturally produce in a young and ardent mind, your Son might suppose that my Preface did not glow with a sufficient warmth of panegyric. But I explained to him the motives by w^h I was directed in saying what I did, and no more, and that I acted under the authority of a rule of Horace which your Son perfectly understands, and which, translated, is this—

‘ One with a flash begins, and ends in smoke,
Another out of smoke brings glorious light,
And without raising expectation high,
Surprises us with dazzling miracles.’

With respect to the Dedication I always thought that if an Individual of Consequence could have been selected, it would have been a favourable circumstance: but as that was not to be done, without a good deal of trouble and previous application for permission, perhaps a Dedication to the public will appear more independent, and will avoid any suspicion of secret influence. The Passage you mention in the ‘Parnassus’ might naturally, on first reading it, give you the impression you remark. I have always considered these lines as the expression of a highly-wrought fancied grief, occasioned by interruptions of his favourite Muse, without y^e smallest reference to any other circumstance in his life. For how is it possible that any such thoughts could come across his mind, who has invariably received such uninterrupted marks of affection and kindness from you? I remain, Dear Madam,

Your obliged and faithful Servant

C. WALLINGTON.

The ‘passage in the Parnassus’ to which this letter makes reference, occurs at the conclusion of a little poem ‘written,’ says the boy-author, ‘at the desire of a lady who asked him for his opinion of our living poets in verse.’ The poem itself is a juvenile panegyric upon Scott and Campbell, with an amusingly solemn reproof to Byron for the immorality of his

Muse, and a few slight sketches of the boy's impressions about other contemporary poets; amongst them Moore, who

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Deserts Parnassus to pursue a fly,

and Wordsworth,

—who followed Homer's rule

In every line to study Nature's school;

For, as his heroes drive the waggon, so

Rustic and rude his humble verses flow.

The lines which his mother appears, from Mr. Wallington's letter, to have suspected might apply to woes originating in her own conduct to the sufferer, obviously refer to a memorable episode described at large by my father in the eighth chapter of this book of his reminiscences. Standing

On the green banks *that shade Brent's humble flood,*

Musing o'er pleasures past and scenes to be,

he exclaims—

Yes! though the hand of time has scarcely spread

His roseate wreath of youth around my head,

Yet I have felt how keen the piercing dart

That grief can give to lacerate the heart.

The 'dart' in this instance had inflicted a wound lasting in some of its effects, and, when the verses were written, the bitterness of the 'grief' had not reached its climax. But in general the pretensions of Youth are preposterous. Gifted with superabundant health, a boundless prospect, and a freshness of sensation which the most miserly of Epicurean millionnaires would thankfully purchase with more than half his fortune, if he could,—that sublimest of egotists, a young man of genius, is seldom moved to write verses about himself except for the purpose of representing the interesting subject of them as the premature victim of fate's fiercest persecution, blighted before his time by some transcendent experience of withering affliction, and sickened with the hollowness and insufficiency of human life under its happiest conditions. Poor Age, thankful

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for small mercies, gratefully employs its waning powers in expatiating on the benevolence of Providence, and the consolations of sorrow and sickness. But then, as Dr. Johnson observed, men write books to prove that poverty is a blessing; no one has thought it worth while to be at the pains of proving the blessing of wealth.

The verses in 'Ismael and other Poems' have no literary value. Yet, with all its defects of immaturity, there is much in the little book that indicates a character precociously developed, and by no means commonplace. The poems are preceded by a preface from the pen of that amiable pedant, Mr. Wallington, under the appropriate pseudonym of Philomousos. 'To court applause by oblique dexterity,' says the pedagogue, 'or, without a due sense of respect for public opinion, impertinently to advance pretensions, is equally revolting to the feelings of an ingenuous mind. But, as genius and a desire of fame are naturally allied, and perhaps the former never existed without the latter, will not the youthful adventurer be justified in endeavouring to stand well in the opinion of the judicious and discerning, by disseminating his works among them—under a confidence that the more candid will be pleased with the first blossoms of poetical talent, not only as the fruits of industry, but as presages in maturer years of more elevated titles to distinction?' And, after a characteristically stately survey of merits, 'which, though not, *perhaps*, of that superior kind which will find a place among the first orders of poetry, are yet marked throughout by the spirit of virtuous sensibility, vigour of fancy, and that characteristic manner which always accompanies strong power of invention,' he concludes with the expression of his hope that 'the author, when his taste is more matured, will perfect the produce of his youthful industry, and augment the stores of a mind formed by nature to accumulate and decorate them. It is only left for me to say,' he adds, 'his saltem accumulem donis. Φιλόμουσος.'

The preceptor's preface is followed by a shorter one from his pupil, in the usual apologetic style. The poems, he says, which his friends have encouraged him to publish, 'were written when I was but a child. They were the first faint dawnings of poetic enthusiasm: and that sense of integrity which should accompany every action, prevented my now altering them in any *material* respect. I expressly state the age at which they were written, and I think it a duty to the public that they should actually *be* written at that age.¹ For the same reason, therefore, and not from any arrogant vanity, I have been particularly careful that no other hand should polish or improve them.' Of the most ambitious of these juvenile essays in verse he says: 'It was begun in a moment of enthusiasm; it was continued from a deep interest in the undertaking, and,' he adds characteristically, 'it was completed from a *dislike I have always entertained to leave anything unfinished.*' Then comes the Dedication, which is not without a retrospective interest.

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TO WHOM SHOULD A YOUNG, AND TIMID
COMPETITOR FOR PUBLIC REPUTATION,
DEDICATE HIS ATTEMPTS,
BUT TO
A BRITISH PUBLIC?

TO THAT PUBLIC, WHO HAVE ALWAYS
BEEN THE FOSTERERS OF INDUSTRY, OR GENIUS,
WHO HAVE ALWAYS LOOKED FORWARD FROM
THE IMPERFECTIONS OF YOUTH,
TO THE
FRUITS OF MATURITY.
IT IS TO THAT GENEROUS PUBLIC,
THAT HE NOW COMMITS HIS HOPES AND HIS FEARS.
IT IS TO THAT GENEROUS PUBLIC,
THAT HE NOW OFFERS HIS
JUVENILE EFFORTS,
FOR THEIR APPLAUSE!

[¹ Owing to the circumstances already explained, however, in the few remarks prefixed to my father's Autobiography, his age was erroneously stated. 'Ismael' was written between the ages of fourteen and sixteen.—L.]

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The publication of this little book was eventful to the boyhood of its writer. For it brought him at once into enlarged contact with minds maturer than his own, and procured for him an acquaintance, curiously intimate for one so young, with some remarkable persons. The result, perhaps, was not of unmixed benefit to a character which needed less than that of most young men so powerful a stimulant to youthful vanity. But in some characters such vanity is a strong incentive to the exertions that discipline and redeem it from self-conceit. The first of the 'other poems' published with 'Ismael' was an address 'To WALTER SCOTT, ESQ.; *written at thirteen years old.*' And this address was acknowledged by Scott in the following letter :—

Sir Walter Scott requests the favour of Mr. Hatchard, to transmit his thanks to the author of 'Ismael' and to assure Mr. Bulwer he is much obliged to him for his attention, and for the pleasure he has received from his poems.

Jermyn Street, Saturday.

CHAPTER VI.

*(Illustrative.)*LETTERS TO A FELLOW-PUPIL. 1820. Æt. 16-17.

[THE premature social activity and independence of the life which, while still in his teens, the boy author of 'Ismael' was already leading, and its effects upon his mind and character, are reflected in the style of the following letters addressed by him, at this time, to one of his fellow-pupils at Ealing. I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. Drake Garrard¹ for permission to include these letters in the present narrative of the early years of his old friend and neighbour; and I do so in the belief that there is a considerable biographical interest in the marked contrast they present, as regards maturity of thought and expression, to those written by the same hand, only two years earlier, from Dr. Hooker's. They certainly attest the fidelity of the portrait painted by my father himself of his boyhood at the age of seventeen.²

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[¹ Of Lama Park, Herts.-L.]

[² In a letter written from Ealing to another of his fellow-pupils there, my father mentions that he had been suffering great pain from an earache. To frequent and severe recurrence of that pain he was subject till middle age, and his public and social life was greatly affected by the deafness it induced. When he was about forty, an abscess revealed itself in the ear from which he had thus suffered ever since the age of sixteen. He was then told by the aurists that any attempt to stop the discharge from this abscess might prove fatal. In his seventieth year, after an exceedingly painful and prolonged attack of earache, the discharge stopped of its own accord, and a few days after he was dead. Truly his life has been called an incurable disease. In these letters their young writer (overflowing with life and energy) predicts his future fame. But at that very moment nature was predicting his death.—L.]

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Edward Bulwer to Drake Garrard (an. æt. 16).

Ealing: February 21, 1820.

Dear Drake,—I answer yours to shew that if I am an unenterprising correspondent I am at least a punctual one; and in this respect I set you an excellent example, which indeed you are rather in want of. For your epistles come 'like angels visits, few and far between.' I will begin by answering your interrogative 'Have you read "Kenilworth"?' in the negative. Nor do I know when I shall, since it is in such great request that my question at those emporia of Lady's science ycleped Circulating Libraries 'Is "Kenilworth" at home?' is always answered by 'No, Sir, no.' I think all your old associates here are gone, except West and Gore, and we have, with the exception of one named Schomberg, who is just come and who is a devilish nice fellow, lost by the exchange.¹ But I do not care much about it, since I leave myself on Lady Day. Do you know a fellow named Slade at Westminster? And do you know another named Musgrove? I have a slight, but very slight, acquaintance with both.

I have just heard that Mrs. Osbaldiston is dead; and, conceiving you to be interested in the news, I communicate it to you! I was in town the greatest part of last Christmas, and found it very dull, as it was so empty. But when I say empty, I speak comparatively; since the immense numbers of all ranks which populate London, that 'Beast with many heads,' are very slightly considered and spoken of when I say town is empty. And I think it is rather singular that the beings above all the rest most insignificant and useless should constitute the thinning or fullness of the metropolis. I mean what Byron calls 'the Insects of Pleasure.' Do you not think I have turned this sentence into a very neat period? I think myself it was very Edgeworthian! But do not be surprised at it; since I intend to have my letters published after my death, like every other great man. And I hope therefore you will take the

[¹ Mention is made of him in my father's autobiographical memoranda, as of a youth whose character he intended to describe. I presume therefore that he must have been more or less influenced or impressed in boyhood by his intercourse with this young man. But the intercourse does not appear to have been continued in after life.—L.]

hint and not destroy either by fire or sword my epistles. It would be quite a profanation to see paper bearing the hieroglyphics of my handwriting embracing the tall and lily form of a tallow candle, or covered with the grease of half a pound of butter. And now having, the Devil knows how, filled up three sides, I will take my leave of you for the present by saying that I am yours very truly,

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Æt. 16-17

E. G. LYTTON BULWER.

The Same to the Same (an. æt. 16).

5, Upper Seymour Street : April 2, 1820.

Dear Drake,—I called at your house in Gloucester Place the other day, but was not so lucky as to find you at Home. I therefore trouble you with a few lines, as I do not know where to call upon you at Westminster. I hope you like your situation there, and that you have now past the somewhat tremendous ordeal of fagging. I know enough of your disposition to assert that you will surmount those difficulties to which a public school is exposed far more easily than most others in your situation. As for your old friend Wallington, he and his establishment are exactly the same as when you left; except, indeed, that we have lost three of your old friends—namely, Stephens, Sneyd and Collard. The latter is, I am sorry to say, very ill, and obliged to go down to the sea for change of air and the benefit of bathing. His complaint is consumptive.

I have been very busy this last month or two preparing a volume of Poems for publication which, however, come out to-morrow (Friday) at Hatchard's, Piccadilly, and your perusal and approbation will oblige me much. I have put my name to them, so you may ask for Bulwer's 'Ismael, an Oriental Tale, with other Poems.' I believe you are a very miscellaneous and pretty deep reader.

Your old classfellow West is likely to be a near neighbour of ours, as he talks of getting a house in Portman Square. I believe your holidays are in May, when I shall hope to have the pleasure of seeing you. If you have leisure to favour me with a line, direct to me at Wallington's, where I think of staying for some short time longer. You will pardon this wretched scrawl, and believe me to be yours very sincerely,

E. G. LYTTON.

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The Same to the Same (an. et. 17).

Knebworth Park : September 15, 1820.

You tell me, my dear Drake, to write to you at Leamington. But as you, in the first place, did not give me your address there, and, secondly, as I had nothing to say which was worth travelling such a distance, I have delayed till now. You will not therefore, I hope, accuse me of negligence in deferring my epistle till I imagined you had returned either to Gloucester Place or to Westminster.

I dined with my brother at General Roper's the other day—your tenant at Lama. I had not seen your place for a long time, and was much pleased with it. The grounds are in my opinion very pretty, and the house equally so; though, as I only saw two rooms I can form no opinion as to its size. The Ropers are, I understand, extremely rich, and seem to live in great style. They have completely Londonised the rooms by those little nick-nacks which you see nowhere but in Town. Their only son is just of age and, *mirabile dictu*, without a foot of land in the county has set up for a candidate at St. Albans. What venal, what infamous, elections are those of boroughs! they are bought and sold like cattle, and the Guardian of our laws, the Rectifier of the mistakes of the nation, the Representative of the Majesty of the People, is placed in our senate, either as a Tool to be employed by those who obtain him the office, or by an abominable pecuniary contract enters (himself in either way a mercenary and base character) to that *sanctum sanc-torum* of Britain, her Parliament.¹

I hope you were amused at Leamington. Pray did you meet a Mrs. Porter, the late Bishop of Cloyne's 'lady'? She went there just before you.

I am now at Knebworth. I shall continue there about a fortnight, and shall be happy to hear from you whenever it is agreeable to yourself; and am, Dear Drake, yours very sincerely,

E. BULWER.]

[¹ It will be seen from this letter that the opinions, or at any rate the sentiments, with which my father entered Parliament as an ardent supporter of the Reform Bill of 1832, were formed at that early and innocent age which is, without knowing it, the Golden Age it dreams of. Young men of generous spirit confidently invest the magnificent moral capital of youth in taking out patents for the improvement of the creation which they are afterwards constrained, and often content, to part with upon very moderate terms.—E.]

CHAPTER VII.

(Illustrative.)

LETTERS FROM ELDER FRIENDS. 1820. *Æt.* 16-17.

[THE preceding correspondence illustrates the intercourse between Mr. Wallington's pupil and one of his young contemporaries at Ealing. The terms on which he was then in correspondence with elder persons, men and women, and the impressions made upon their minds by 'young Mr. Bulwer,' find striking illustration in the letters addressed to him at this time, and during the following year (1820-21), both by Dr. Parr and by the Mrs. Porter spoken of in the last letter to his friend Drake Garrard. This lady was the widow of 'the erudite Bishop of Cloyne,' mentioned by my father in the second chapter of his Autobiography: and he says of her in the reminiscences already referred to (Book II. chap. i.), 'I think she must have known my father. She was very friendly to me on my precocious entrance into society.' This friendliness is warmly expressed in the following letters.

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VII.*Æt.* 16-17*Mrs. Porter to Edward Bulwer.*

Leamington, Warwickshire: December 24, 1820.

My dear young and amiable friend,—You quote Pope, then why not I, when his verse may be so well applied?

'Praise from *thy* lips 'tis mine with joy to boast.
He best can give it who deserves it most.'

I am truly sorry for the cause of your absence from Knebworth; but, were it the means of bringing you here, I should say there

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comes 'good out of evil.' Excuse a proverb. Never let me hear you say again that time hangs heavy on your hands. A mind like yours—a head and heart like yours—must always find employment, whether London be full or empty. Remember me to *your* good mother and *my* good friend. And of yourself what shall I say? Believe that in all places I shall ever remain your most sincere and true,

MARY PORTER.

P.S. When do you leave your Tutor? Are you going into the army? Let me hear from you soon, if you please. But I am half afraid of writing to you because I know your genius, and my own stupidity. Make allowances for your friend. It is a curious thing that I should have thought so much of you lately, and that your charming, poetic, welcome letter should have come just at this time. Adieu.

The Same to the Same.

Leamington: January 14, 1821.

My dear friend,—Again I have to thank you. Your letter was received, read, and, as usual, much admired. Wherever I am, it shall not be *my* fault if we do not *converse* with each other. If I intrude too much upon your time, be honest and say so. I am glad you do not follow the drum, both because it would have pained the best of mothers, and because your head is fit for greater things. I think you wrong yourself by saying you are not *submissive*, and therefore unfit for the Army, where subordination is required. Tell me what you are *not* fit for; and never apologise for your style of writing. I like to hear of your plans in life; and the more you tell me of yourself, the more I shall be inclined to believe that you regard me as your sincere friend. May many seasons roll over your head, with sorrows unknown; may you be blessed with every happiness you so well deserve; and lastly, my dear young friend, may you ever think of me as I think of you. Let not time, or the pleasures of the young and gay, ever cause you to drop the friendship of your sincere

MARY PORTER.

The Same to the Same.

Leamington: January 15, 1821.

Can you really suppose me interested in your concerns? Ever entertain that thought. It is only doing me justice. Heaven only

knows when we shall meet. Perhaps I shall be in town for a short time, at the end of May. But you have so made me wish to be what you say *I am*, that in your presence I shall be quite *honteuse*, and you will think me the stupidest creature in the world. I fear you have a bad opinion of women, and think they are fond of flattery. I must own it is delightful to be thought well of by those we esteem. But then, my good young friend, when you write, you forget to whom you are writing. You show your own power at the expense of your sincere friend. Nevertheless write to me by return of post.

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Your very sincere M. P.

But the tone of Dr. Parr's letters is still more remarkable.

Samuel Parr to Edward Bulwer.

Hatton: February 9, 1821.

Dear Sir,—Permit me to offer you the tribute of my praise for the very elegant letter you have lately written to me, and of my thanks for the honour you have conferred upon me by offering to dedicate to me your poems. I feel strong and triumphant anticipations of the just recognition of their excellence; and you will excuse me for confessing that, as a continual writer and a man of letters, I should derive even peculiar satisfaction from the appreciation of such a writer, and such a man, as I believe you to be. And now, dear Sir, let me turn to some interesting topics. When I rambled into Norfolk, and for nearly seven years while I resided at Pinner, it was my good fortune often to visit your grandfather, Mr. Bulwer, at his old and venerable mansion. He was not only a studious man, he was also the best bred, as well as the best informed, country gentleman in Norfolk. But you have another, and yet stronger, claim upon my attention. My acquaintance with Richard Warburton Lytton began when he was a boy at Harrow School. It continued for more than thirty years. His singularities were numerous; but his erudition was stupendous. He visited me in Middlesex, and spent nearly three weeks with me at Hatton. I have spent weeks and months with him at Bath, and we were often together at Knebworth. He consulted me frequently on subjects of the highest importance; and, together with the late Sir William Jones, I was selected by him as guardian to your mother. I also knew Sir Paul Jodrell and Richard Jodrell; and I

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mention these circumstances to show you how lively an interest I felt in welcoming my correspondent when I saw at the end of his letter 'E. G. Lytton Bulwer.' Be assured that I will take proper measures for you to present your MS. with your own hands to Her Majesty, and that I shall convey to her my opinion of the writer. Now, Mr. Bulwer, let me write to you with my wonted plainness. Let not the summer pass away without your coming to see me at my Parsonage. My books will delight you. And here let me express my sorrow that the library of Mr. Lytton was sold, when there was in store a grandson so able to use it. I often see our amiable friend, Mrs. Porter, and our conversation has lately turned upon you. * If I should visit the capital at the commencement of the year, depend upon it I shall then pay my personal compliments to you. I beg of you to write, and direct your next letter to me at Dr. J. Johnstone's, Temple, near Birmingham. I go there on Monday next. With best wishes to you and your mother, I have the honour to subscribe myself, dear Sir,

Your faithful and obedient humble Servant,

SAMUEL PARR.

The Same to the Same.

Hatton: March 17, 1821.

Dear Mr. Bulwer,—I shall read with the greatest attention any manuscript which you may choose to lay before me; and, if you were better acquainted with the character of my mind, you would expect a plain declaration of my real opinion. I well remember the large old house at Knebworth, and the rows of stag-horns which hang up in the hall. I heard some time ago that the house had been nearly pulled down, and I hope the new edifice is capacious as well as elegant. Assure Mrs. Bulwer of my esteem and unfeigned good will. Time softens the harsher features of things and persons; and I am convinced that, in talking of events which passed long ago, we should sometimes be amused, and sometimes interested. Send me your MS. and believe me, dear Sir, with a just and assured sense of the intellectual powers with which you have been blessed,

Your well-wisher and obedient Servant,

S. PARR.

The Same to the Same.

Hatton: March 27, 1821.

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Dear and excellent Mr. Bulwer,—I am delighted with the elegant language and vigorous spirit of your letter. I shall read the MS. with great attention, and, with my wonted fidelity, I shall tell you my opinion of it. If you prefer addressing your Dedication to me rather than to Lord Holland, you have my entire assent. To be sure, dear Sir, I must feel some little regret that so enlightened and honourable a man as yourself should not quite agree with me in politics. But this is my situation with other wise and virtuous men.* We esteem and confide in one another. We put no invidious construction upon motives. We are ready to discharge, the one to the other, all the lovely and useful duties of private life; and upon public affairs we mean well to our country. God bless you. Do not fail to present my best respects to your mother. I am, dear Sir, most sincerely,

Your well-wisher and obedient humble Servant,

S. PARR.

The Same to the Same.

Hatton: April 26, 1821.

Dear Mr. Bulwer,—I dictate this from a couch to a friendly scribe. I have this morning arranged all the letters with which you have honoured me; and I assure you that the impression they have made upon my mind can do no discredit to your learning, to your taste, to your ingenuity, and, above all, to the moral character of your mind. I am proud of such a correspondent; and, if we lived nearer to each other, I should expect to be very happy indeed in such a friend.

Mr. Bulwer, I mean to preserve your letters, and, before I dictate one more sentence, I will put them together. I shall enclose them in a strong envelope, and concisely but significantly write my opinion on their value.

This promise has just been performed by my Oxonian scribe and myself; and now I shall go on with my letter.

I have read your poems very attentively. I have ventured to mark every passage I wish you to reconsider, and I rejoice that you will have full time for revisal, correction, and decoration. Really, when I think of your youth, my delight is mingled with

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astonishment at your intellectual powers. And, although in our politics we differ widely, yet I feel a pure, and I had almost said a holy, satisfaction in contemplating the moral properties of your mind. It is quite wonderful that such a habit of observation has been formed, and such a rich store of its fruits, collected and made ready for use, at your time of life. There are many vestiges of your reading in classical authors; but you have taken a wider range than is generally taken by young men: and there is a secret charm pervading all your writing, which I trace not only to your discernment but also to your sensibility. But pray, dear Sir, when you speak of Burke and the Three, tell the reader who the three were. And surely in the 'Illustrious Friend' you will find ample materials for one or two couplets; but no more.

I differ from you, and from many of my contemporaries, upon the poetical merits of Walter Scott. Lord Byron stands on the highest pinnacle in my estimation: and Moore, whom you admire, deserves in *secundis consistere*. Crabbe only can be the rival for the second place. I see great excellence, *sometimes*, in Southey; and there are *parts* in the writings of Campbell which lead me to consider him as a Poet.

Increase your store of poetical imagery. Write whenever you find yourself disposed to write: but collect the whole force of self-command, and let not the *limæ labor et mora* discourage you. The largest collection of modern Latin Poets I ever saw is in my own possession; and, if you lived near me, I should often set you a long, but most useful and delightful task in reading them. Remember, dear Sir, how much Milton and Gray were indebted to their learning: and you may be sure that Pope drew very largely from sources little known. I am, dear Sir, truly your well-wisher, your admirer, and

Your obedient, humble Servant,

S. PARR.

P.S.—BE AMBITIOUS!

And this letter was written by a man of sixty-four to a boy of seventeen.]

CHAPTER VIII.

(Autobiographical.)

FIRST LOVE. 1820. ÆT. 17.

VAGUE, wild beatings of the heart, how sorrowfully I now recall you ! I longed for some one to love ; I cared not whom. There was a pretty village girl, in a cottage near the house of Mr. Wallington, often seen plaiting straw by the threshold. To her I gave a whole romance—never spoken. For I never once uttered a word to her ; but I used to pass by the door, and at length she noticed me, and smiled and blushed when I passed. If I saw her alone, I looked on her with longing tenderness ; but if ever I saw a young peasant loitering near, I looked such indignant daggers ! I was terribly jealous of her, and fancied I had a right to be so. Nay, by degrees, from the magnetism, I suppose, that one heart conveys to another, she seemed to accord me that right. For when I looked thus angry, she replied by a deprecatory, sorrowful look ; and I have even seen the tears in her eyes. Still we never spoke. She was, no doubt, inexperienced and innocent, and never gave me an opportunity. And certainly I never made one. Nay, I don't think I desired it. The illusion was worth more than any reality. This lasted a whole summer. The next summer, alas ! I found elsewhere both reality and illusion. A brief tale of true passion, and of great sorrow : a tale never to be told. But, when that tragedy was over, I felt myself changed for life. Henceforth melancholy became an essential part of my being ; henceforth I contracted the

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disposition to be alone and to brood. I attained to the power of concentrating the sources of joy and sorrow in myself. My constitution was materially altered. It was long before I knew again the high animal spirits which delight in wild sport and physical action. Till then I had been irascible, combative, rash, foolhardy. Afterwards, my temper grew more soft and gentle, and my courage was rather the result of pride and jealous honour than the fearless instinct that rejoiced in danger. My ambition, too, became greatly subdued; nor did it ever return to what it was in boyhood.



BANKS OF THE BRENT NEAR EALING.

CHAPTER IX.

*(Illustrative.)*LOVE STORY CONTINUED. 1820. *Æt.* 17.

[In the preceding chapter my father says that 'the brief tale of true passion and great sorrow' was never to be told. CHAP. IX.

Never told completely, but revealed in fragments: and of its history, till the happy days had reached their sudden close, I have found among his papers a very beautiful and touching record; which, though undated, appears to have been written at an early period of his literary career. Æt. 17

The country around the village in which my good preceptor resided, was rural enough for a place so near the metropolis. A walk of somewhat less than a mile, through lanes that were themselves retired and lonely, led to green sequestered meadows, through which the humble Brent crept along its snake-like way. O God! how palpably, even in hours the least friendly to remembrance, there rises before my eyes, when I close them, that singular dwarfed tree which overshadowed the little stream, throwing its boughs half way to the opposite margin! I wonder if it still survives. I dare not revisit that spot. And there we were wont to meet (poor children that we were!), thinking not of the world we had scarce entered; dreaming not of fate and chance; reasoning not on what was to come; full only of our first-born, our ineffable love. Along the quiet road between Ealing and Castlebar, the lodge gates stood (perhaps they are still standing), which led to the grounds of a villa once occupied by the Duke of Kent.¹ To the right of those gates, as you

[¹ The old gates still stand, but no longer in their old place. The grounds formerly belonging to the Duke of Kent's villa have long ago been partitioned and sold in lots to enterprising builders. The villa itself has been pulled down. In its place are other smaller villas, each with a little pleasure-ground of its

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approached them from the common, was a path. Through two or three fields, as undisturbed and lonely as if they lay in the heart of some solitary land far from any human neighbourhood, this path conducted to the banks of the little rivulet, overshadowed here and there by blossoming shrubs and crooked pollards of fantastic shape. Along that path once sped the happiest steps that ever bore a boy's heart to the object of its first innocent worship.

She was one or two years older than I. She had the sweetest face, the gentlest temper ever given to girlhood. The sort of love we felt for each other I cannot describe. It was so unlike the love of grown-up people; so pure that not one wrong thought ever crossed it, and yet so passionate that never again have I felt, nor ever again can I feel, any emotion comparable to the intensity of its tumultuous tenderness.

It was then summer. She did not live in the immediate neighbourhood of those pleasant fields which were our place of daily meeting. But, though she was well born, very peculiar circumstances had created for her a liberty almost equal to my own. We were too much children, both of us, to talk in set phrase of marriage. But we believed, with our whole hearts and souls, that we were born for each other, and that nothing could ever separate us. And so we had no care for the future. That was the warmest and the brightest summer I ever knew in this country. I can remember none like it. The sky smiled and glowed on us as if it also were full of love. At the Duke's lodge the gardener used to sell fruit. So there, as I passed it, I made my purchases for our little feasts, and, as I was

own, comprising some portion of the old domain. Of these, the largest and handsomest now belongs to a gentleman named Gibbon, who is, I believe, a solicitor. This information I (the first pilgrim to a spot hallowed for me by the recollections here recorded) received from that gentleman's gardener, who obligingly conducted me over the grounds of the Villa Gibbon; and, in reply to my inquiries, pointed out to me the place to which the old iron gates have been transferred from another part of them. The present stables are, I believe, a remnant of the old ones; and considerable portions of the old brick wall which formerly surrounded the Duke's kitchen-garden (many also of the old fruit-trees) are still standing. Nothing else is left to indicate the forgotten seat of that brief but boundless empire, a boy's first love. The ducal domain is no more: and the name of Gibbon is appropriately associated with the decline and fall of it. Of the 'green sequestered meadows,' some remain: still green, but no longer sequestered. They are now appropriated to the rifle practice of the neighbouring volunteer corps, and much frequented in summer by urchin bathers and fishers in the waters of the Brent, still flowing through them between banks covered with blossoming shrubs and overshadowed here and there by the branches of dwarf trees.—L.]

always first upon the spot, I spread them out on the grass, where the stream grew darker, under the boughs of that old dwarf tree.

When I saw her at a distance my heart beat so violently that I could not breathe without a painful effort. But the moment I heard her voice I was calm. That voice produced, throughout my whole frame, a strange sensation of delicious repose. The whole universe seemed hushed by it into a holy stillness. Comparing what I felt then with all I have felt since, I cannot say if it was real love. Perhaps not. I think it was something infinitely happier and less earthly. Till that time, my spirits had been high and my constitutional gaiety almost turbulent. But when I sat beside her, or looked into her soft melancholy face, or when I thought of it in absence, the tears stood in my eyes, I knew not why. I am not sure that she was what others would call handsome. Often now I see faces that seem to me beautiful, and people smile at me when I say so. But, looking close into my impressions of them, I perceive it was a trait, a look, an air, like hers, that charmed me with them; and my only notion of beauty is something that resembles her.

No one ever suspected our meetings, nor even, I believe, our acquaintanceship. I had no confidant in any of my companions. I was well with all, but intimate with none. And the poor girl had no sister, no mother, no friend, I believe, but me. I think it was her desolate state, in its contrast to my own happy home, and ardent hopes, and bright prospects, that first drew me to her. I never breathed her name to a human being. How thankful I am now for my silence! Sweet saint, *your* name, at least, shall never be exposed to the deliberate malignity, the low ribaldry that have so relentlessly assailed my own. If ever I fulfil the hopes I once cherished; if ever I outlive my foes and silence their atrocious slanders; if ever the time should come when your memory will not be reviled, because it is dear to me and sacred; when none are left to hate you for the love you gave me, and from those who will have known you only as its sinless martyr, the tale of your long, unrecorded sufferings, may win perhaps tears softer and less bitter than my own; then, if ever, but never till then, shall that tale be told.

The last time we met was at evening, a little before sunset. I had walked to London in the morning, to buy her a book which she had wished to read. I had not written my name on the title-page, but I said, half-jealously, as I gave it to her, 'You will never lend it to anyone? never give it away?'

She shook her head, and smiled sadly; and then after a little

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pause, she said, without answering my question, 'It will talk to me when you are gone.'

So then, for the first time, we began to speak gravely of the future. But the more we discussed it, the more disquieted we became. And it ended with the old phrase, 'We shall meet to-morrow.'

The sun had set, and it was already dark. I could scarcely distinguish her features, as I turned to depart. But when I had left the spot some little way behind me, looking back to it I could see that she was still standing there. So I turned and rejoined her. She was weeping. Yet she had *then* no knowledge of what was to happen, and she could not say why she wept. I was unable to comfort her, for I shared (though in a less degree) her own forebodings. But I covered her hands with my tears and kisses, till at last she drew them away from my grasp, placed them on my head as I half knelt before her, said in half-choked accents 'God bless you!' and hurried away.

It was my turn then to linger on the spot. I cried out 'To-morrow! to-morrow we shall meet as before!' My voice came back to me without an answer, and we never met again. Never, never.

The next day she came not, nor the next. Then I learned that she was gone. What had happened I cannot relate. Some months afterwards there came a letter. Not from her. She was married. She, whose heart, whose soul, whose every thought and feeling, all were mine to the last, she who never spared even a dream to another,—lost, lost to me for ever!

It does not seem to have occurred to my father, either at the time or afterwards, that the poor girl's dejection throughout the final meeting was caused by something much stronger than a presentiment. Her evasive reply to the request that she would never lend the book he gave her (a request which in her altered circumstances she might have no power to fulfil), her lingering to weep on the spot where they had parted, and the sudden spasmodic effort with which she tore herself away from her lover's ebullitions of feeling—all indicate plainly that she was consciously bidding him a last farewell. Their interviews had probably become known to her father, and he must have

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peremptorily interfered to put an end to an apparently hopeless attachment. The sequel is only told in outline. She was forced into a marriage against which her heart protested. For three years, in obedience to duty, she strove to smother the love which consumed her; and, when she sank under the conflict, and death was about to release her from the obligations of marriage and life itself, she wrote a letter to my father with her dying hand, informed him of the suffering through which she had passed, and of her unconquerable devotion to him, and intimated a wish that he should visit her grave. Of his pilgrimage to that spot (somewhere in the neighbourhood of Ulléswater) in the summer of 1824, we have the account further on. 'I think,' he says in the manuscript printed above, 'it was her desolate state that first drew me to her.' And it was probably a surviving influence of this early association of love with the sentiment of pity which, in all his subsequent intercourse with women, disposed him to find in a woman's apparent need of his protection the most seductive of all her attractions. That influence, as will afterwards be seen, was one of the leading motives of his marriage; and, throughout the long practical widowhood of his after life, it combined with other dispositions to isolate him more and more from the society of all who were not to some extent dependent on his care or his support.

The impression left on my father by this early 'phantom of delight' was indelible, and coloured the whole of his life. He believed that, far beyond all other influences, it shaped his character, and it never ceased to haunt his memory. Allusions to it are constantly recurring in his published works; and in none of them is it more prominent than in the last of all. 'I would give your weight in gold to possess you once more,' he says, in his mature years, of the desk on which he wrote at Mr. Wallington's his 'first outpourings of love.' 'Satirist and politician though I be, I think I should never write a harsh or ungente line were you once more the com-

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panion of my studies.' The words were not a passing sentiment. The magic power of the association was in the gentle girl who subdued everything he connected with her into the likeness of herself.

The spell she laid upon him comes out again in the letters wherein 'Falkland' confides to 'Monkton' the recollections of his boyhood :—

When I left Dr. — I was sent to a private tutor. It was during that time that—but what then befel me is for no living ear ! The characters of that history are engraven on my heart in letters of fire : but it is a language none but myself have the authority to read. It is enough for the purpose of my confessions that the events of that period were connected with the first awakening of the most powerful of human passions ; and that, whatever their commencement, their end was despair. And she, the object of that love—the only being who ever possessed the secret and the spell of my nature—her life was the bitterness and the fever of a troubled heart, her rest is the grave. That attachment was not so much a single event as the first link in a long chain coiled around my heart. It was after the first violent grief produced by it that I began to apply with earnestness to books. From the moment in which the buoyancy of my spirit was first broken by real anguish, the losses of the *heart* were repaired by the experience of the *mind*. I passed at once, like Melmoth, from youth to age.—'Falkland,' pp. 15-19.

It was she who inspired the following passage in one of his earliest essays :—

'My lost, my buried, my forgotten ! You, whom I knew in the first fresh years of life—you, who were snatched from me before one leaf of the Summer of Youth and of love was withered—you, over whose grave, yet a boy, I wept away half the softness of my soul,—now that I know the eternal workings of the world, and the destiny of all human ties, I rejoice that you are no more !—that custom never dulled the music of your voice, the pathos and the magic of your sweet eyes—that the halo of a dream was round you to the last ! Had you survived till now, we should have survived—not our love, indeed—but all that renders love most divine—the rapt and wild idolatry that scarce imagined it adored a mortal

thing of frailty and of change—the exaggerated, the measureless, credulity in the faith, the virtues, of each other, that almost made us what it believed, in our desire not to fall short of the god-like standard by which we were raised in our mutual vision above the children of earth. All this—how long since would it have passed away! our love would have fallen into 'the portion of weeds and worn-out faces,' which is the lot of all who love. As it is, I can transport myself from every earthly disappointment when I recur to you! On your image there rests no shadow of a shade! In my hours of sickness—in the darkness of despondency—in the fever of petty cares, and all the terrors of the future—you glide before me in your fresh youth, and with your tender smile—for from you never came the harsh word or the wronging thought. In all that I recall of you there is not one memory which I would forget. Death is the great treasure-house of Love. There, lies buried the real wealth of passion and of youth; there, the heart, once so prodigal, now grown the miser, turns to contemplate the hoards it has hidden from the world. Henceforth it is but the common and petty coins of affection, that it wastes on the uses and things of life.—Essay 'On the Want of Sympathy,' republished in 'The Student,' 1882.

The same master thought which he has here expressed in prose, he embodied later in verse; and in these stanzas from 'King Arthur' it is still apparent that the 'golden holiday' on the banks of the Brent had lost none of its enchantment:—

'Two loves, and both divine and pure, there are.

One by the roof-tree takes its root for ever:

Nor tempests rend nor changeful seasons mar:

It clings the stronger for the storm's endeavour.

Beneath its shade the wayworn find their rest,

And in its boughs the cushat builds her nest.

But one more frail, in that more prized perchance

Bends its rich blossoms over lonely streams

By the untrodden ways of wild Romance,

On earth's far confines, like the Tree of Dreams.*

Few find the path. O linger ye that find.

'Tis lost for ever when 'tis left behind.

* 'In medio ramos,' &c.—Virgil, vi. 282.

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O the short spring ! the eternal winter ! All,
 Branch, stem, all shatter'd ! fragile as the bloom !
 Yet this the love it charms us to recall :
 Life's golden holiday before the tomb.
 Yea, *this* the love which age again lives o'er,
 And hears the heart beat loud with youth once more.

And this love the author's own age did, in memory, 'again live o'er.' For to the love episode in 'Kenelm Chillingly' (the last, and yet, in that part of it, perhaps one of the freshest and youngest of his works) the recollections of the old man transferred all that his boyhood had bequeathed to them of the ineffaceable impressions made upon his inner life by the enduring potency of his first love.]

CHAPTER X.

*(Autobiographical.)*LIFE AT ST. LAWRENCE. 1821. *Æt.* 18. •

It had been a subject of discussion between my mother and Mr. Wallington whether Oxford or Cambridge should be the University selected for the completion of my academical career. Mr. Wallington, of course, strongly advised Oxford, and my mother at first seemed so inclined. For myself, at the time when my choice might have turned the scale, I was wholly indifferent. I was wrapped in my own secret grief, and the future had no place in my thoughts. My mother did not then comprehend the state in which I was, body and mind. To her I seemed sullen and ungrateful; and perhaps it was because she thought that my tutor had failed to render me more amiable, that she suddenly discarded his advice, and resolved that I should go to Cambridge. This was a great mistake. My studies had not been directed to the abstract sciences, which at that day were the principal avenues to distinction at the University thus selected. I did not know even the elements of mathematics. It was resolved to send me to the house of a Cambridge man, to teach me Algebra and Euclid. One evening the coach set me down at the gates of a house at St. Lawrence, near Ramsgate. Young eyes peered at me from the windows; and I passed up the front garden, pale, thin, and careworn, the ghost of what I had been a year before. Mr. Thomson, my new tutor, was as completely the genuine Cambridge man, as Mr. Wallington had been the

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Oxford man. Wallington was a Tory, Thomson a Whig; Wallington was High Church, Thomson somewhat of a latitudinarian; Wallington was dignified and silent, Thomson easy and loquacious; Wallington loved a quotation, Thomson loved a joke. Both of them were excellent men in different ways. Thomson would have called Wallington a prig, Wallington would have called Thomson vulgar. Thomson had a great advantage over Wallington in domestic life. He had chosen a pleasant, good-tempered, affectionate partner, who never answered him when he was cross. I liked Thomson much, Mrs. Thomson more. There were but two pupils besides myself. They were about my own age, but I looked on them as mere children. They had not seen the world, as I had done, in boudoir and drawing-room; they had much less information; they were shorter than I was by half a head; and they did not dress like men. For the rest, they were amiable enough: one of them clever, the other dull, and both played the flute.

I found a peculiar interest in my new residence, for I learned, to my surprise, that it had belonged to my erudite grandfather Lytton. Hence had emerged all those books which so excited my childish wonder. Here had he lived obscure, amassing stores of learning that humbled even the arrogance of Parr; and here had he died, leaving behind no trace of his labouring path through the wide world of knowledge. Many little anecdotes of his eccentric habits, his benevolent simplicity, endeared to me his memory, and made me forgive him the single flogging of my young existence. These anecdotes came back to me when I drew the portrait of Austin Caxton.¹

The neighbouring watering-place of Ramsgate was gay with dinners and carpet dances. Friends of my family found me out, and invited me often. On pretence of not disturbing

[¹ Though published much later, *The Caxtons* was written before *Lucretia*, or *the Children of Night*, which made its appearance in 1847.—L.]

my tutor's household by late hours, Mr. Thomson suggested to me to hire a bedroom in the immediate neighbourhood. I rejoiced at that symbol of independence, and I did not abuse the liberty thus improperly accorded to my youth. How I loved that little room in a stocking-weaver's cottage, so homely, and yet all my own! I had much time to myself. Mr. Thomson soon discovered that in classics he could teach me nothing; and I soon discovered that in mathematics I was disposed to learn as little. But in my own quiet room I collected all the books that the neighbouring libraries could furnish, and read them with vague, desultory application. Then, for the first time, the 'Confessions of Rousseau,' in a bad English translation, fell into my hands. The book made on my mind a strong impression; and, so far as my estimate of Rousseau as a man is concerned, I fear that impression is indelible. Stripped of the charm of its native style by the dull translator, the book shocked all my notions of human dignity, not more by the meanness of the faults or vices it recorded, than by the shameless cynicism with which they were confessed. My youth could not make those indulgent allowances for the morbidities of a diseased temperament which a wide experience of mankind would compel me to make now. This exhibition of moral paltriness by the side of intellectual grandeur permanently lowered the homage I had till then been inclined to render to intelligence in the abstract; and made me cling with the more loyal reverence to the simple masculine virtues of courage, truth, and honour. A few years afterwards, the other works of Rousseau, more especially the 'Nouvelle Héloïse' and the 'Rêveries,' produced on me a different kind of effect. Read in the original, the exquisite grace of their diction, the elaborate melody of their cadence, captivated my taste; and I studied them with care as models of style.

In the meanwhile, however, my spirits became more and more dejected; my health more and more enfeebled. I

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wandered alone for hours, in a state of desolate sadness impossible to describe. I flew eagerly to Religion for her comforts; and my prayers were murmured through burning tears. But it was long before I found the consolation that I sought. My nerves were so shattered, that Religion oppressed me with her awe, rather than soothed me with her mercy. I can remember some snatches of poetry I wrote under that state of mind. They are the first lines I ever wrote that gave promise of originality, for they were the expression of feelings peculiar to myself. They were the wail of a soul alone, and severed from its race.

About this time I fortunately contracted an acquaintance with a young man some years older than myself. Indeed, he had just taken his degree at Cambridge, where he gained the Chancellor's Medal for a poem on Jerusalem. He had, moreover, published a volume of poetry. Chauncy Hare Townshend¹ (such was his name) was still staying at Ramsgate with his

[¹ Of Chauncy Hare Townshend a short biography has been written by Charles Dickens. He was an accomplished man, with many intellectual tastes, but little intellectual power; an amateur painter, musician, and poet, and a collector of pictures, coins, and gems, which he bequeathed, I think, to the South Kensington Museum. On leaving college he entered holy orders, having, I believe, three livings in his own gift. But his theological views were hazily unorthodox; and without actually leaving the Church of England, he soon ceased to act as one of its officiating priesthood. When I knew him he must have been nearly sixty, but was still very good-looking, very well dressed, and very well 'preserved'; an amiable sybarite, of delicate health and character, a great admirer of Mr. Maurice, and a copious writer and composer of songs, which he was fond of singing to his own accompaniment on the piano. He interested himself greatly in the phenomena of *clairvoyance* at a time when attention and controversy were being excited by Dr. Elliotson's adoption of mesmerism (partly as a curative process, but mainly as a means of inducing insensibility under surgical operations) before the discovery of anæsthetics. On this subject Townshend recorded the results of his experiments in an interesting book. He married, in youth, a young lady with whom he fell in love (from the sweetness of her voice) whilst listening to a hymn sung by her in a village church. They soon afterwards separated. He had no children, no very intimate ties; and his income (a large one) was spent chiefly upon the purchase of nicknacks, and the bestowal of private charity; for he was a kind-hearted man, though not without the gentle egotism natural to kind-hearted men who have no inherited or contracted duties to distract their attention from themselves. The latter years of his life were passed chiefly at

parents and a fair young sister. He was very kind to me, and I accompanied him in long boating excursions on the sea. The breezes did good to my health, and my companion's conversation benefited my mind. He impressed me with the idea of being singularly calm and pure. In spite of a beauty of face which at that time attracted the admiration of all who even passed him in the streets, his manners and converse were characterised by an almost feminine modesty. He used to say, smiling, that he did not believe he was susceptible to love. Withal, he had a pervading sense of his own existence. With an egotism not uncommon to young poets, he thought, wrote, and talked of himself—his own peculiarities and feelings. Thus, unconsciously, I became attracted from *my* sorrows, and gazed on the portrait of another, not the mirror of myself. Townshend, too, had made the acquaintance of eminent poets. He had visited Wordsworth, and he corresponded with Southey. Stars that before had been scarcely visible on my horizon

Lausanne, where he had purchased a villa on the shores of Lake Leman. My father (who, not having been to a public school, found few old friends at Cambridge when he first went there, and who was there, as at all times, exceedingly shy and sensitive) resented what appeared to him the coldness and carelessness of his reception by Townshend at the University, where they were not long together; and it was not till many years later that their intercourse was renewed by the following letter.

Schloss Wyesberg, bei Innsbruck, im Tyrol: February 29, 1840.

My dear Sir Edward,.—Years have passed since you wrote me a very kind letter, somewhat renewing the intimacy which once subsisted between us, and then was unfortunately broken by an unintentional fault upon my side. The letter to which I allude was very grateful to my feelings; but that I did not follow up the opening it seemed to make must be attributed to a delicacy on my part, a shrinking from even the *appearance* of courting the celebrated author, or of having sought him after an interval of years from any self-interested motives. Since then I have been much abroad, or perhaps I should have earlier conquered what after all is perhaps a very foolish pride, and have followed the simple dictates of the heart; which, as we grow older, turns most perseveringly towards our first friendships, and those youthful recollections which are 'the master light of our being.' Do you ever think of Ramsgate, and our pleasant excursions there by sea and land? . . . Believe me, my dear Sir Edward,

Very sincerely yours,

CHAUNCY HARE TOWNSHEND.—L.]

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loomed near through his anecdotes, and their grand influence reached me. I felt, too, a brotherly interest in his pretty sister, who had lately passed through a deep disappointment in love. Sympathy drew me towards her; and her presence soothed and calmed me.

Poor thing! she married a year or two afterwards; and died young, from the after effects of childbirth.

Towards the later autumn, my mother came to pass a few months at the neighbouring Broadstairs. She was strongly opposed to my lodgment out of the tutor's house; but to this liberty I clung with obstinate vehemence, and finally carried the point.

I left Mr. Thomson's house, after the Christmas holidays, somewhat improved in health and spirits, but still sickly and dejected. I had gained very little in knowledge of books under his direct care; though I had picked up a few things of value, here and there, from the waifs I had myself collected. But, languid and objectless, indifferent to ambition, not dreaming of honours, shunning companionship, averse from noisy pleasures, I went into the animated, restless, world of the University.

CHAPTER XI.

(Supplementary and Illustrative.)

THE MANUSCRIPT OF 'LIONEL HASTINGS.'

[IN the second chapter of this Book reference is made to an unfinished romance which describes with great fidelity under a fictitious character my father's feelings as a schoolboy, and even the circumstances and events of his life at that period. The manuscript of this fragment was found among his papers after his death. No precise date can be assigned to it; but from the character of the handwriting, and the quality of the paper, I believe it to have been written between the years 1840 and 1850, probably before the commencement of 'The Caxtons,' and certainly before the commencement of 'What will he do with it?' a work in which some of its outlines have been adopted with considerable alteration and development. The biographical interest of it (and few, if any, of all the posthumous papers published in these volumes are more interesting from a biographical point of view) arises wholly from its close relation to that period of my father's life which has already been described in his Autobiography. Nor will its appearance in this place unduly interrupt the course of the narrative it illustrates. For with the preceding chapter of the present Book, we have completely closed one epoch in his life; and with the first chapter of the next Book we shall open upon an entirely new scene. The autobiographical character of the tale will be recognised in every page by all who have followed the true story it idealises, Dr. Hooker is

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the obvious original of Dr. Wortham. Rottendean is revived in Puzzledcan. The originals of the dead Colonel, of Lady Anne Hastings, and of her son, are unmistakable. Mr. Tuftoe does duty for Dr. Keate. In Highclere there are apparent reminiscences of Mr. Wallington, mixed with traits taken, in later life, from a more modern character. Christopher Cotton I believe to be a highly idealised embodiment of a rather eccentric old gentleman who will reappear in the sequel of this biography. The portrait of Lady Clara is almost identical with that of Lady Caroline Lamb, which will be found in a later chapter of the Autobiography; and the incident which led to my father's acquaintance with her he repeated, with but little variation, in the tale.]

LIONEL HASTINGS.

VOLUME I.

CHAPTER I.

Letter from the Rev. Dr. Wortham to the Right Hon. Lady Anne Hastings.

'Puzzledcan Rectory, near Deal: July 24, 18—.

'My dear Madam,—Your son will leave us by the coach to-morrow, so that he will probably be with you two or three hours after the receipt of the letter I have now the honour to address to your ladyship. I flatter myself that you will find him much improved in health; and I can satisfactorily answer your questions as to the progress he has made in his studies during the last quarter. He is now a very fair classical scholar for his age; though, should you decide on sending him to a public school, his obstinate deficiencies in the composition of Latin Verse will tell much against the position his general knowledge would otherwise enable him to take there. I say *obstinate*: for these deficiencies can only be ascribed to the self-will pervading his whole character. He thinks proper to despise the art of Latin versification; the elegance of which, I should observe to you, consists in a spirited imitation of

the most approved models. "I do not desire to succeed," he said to me, somewhat pertly, "where it is a merit not to be original." And original certainly your son is disposed to be. You ask me my frank opinion as to his intellectual capacities and moral qualities. My dear Madam, it is hard to answer you, for the boy puzzles me. He does some things amazingly well; and some most lamentably ill. Nevertheless, his abilities are incontestable. He has great quickness; a very retentive memory; and, when he pleases, a more determined application than all the other boys in the school put together. The quality most pronounced in him is energy; and his worst fault, as a schoolboy, is his impatience of routine and discipline. He has an astonishing vitality, a superabundance of life. He is too much for my quiet school, though there are many boys in it considerably older than he, and though his frame appears rather delicate than robust. He is not exactly quarrelsome, but he is terribly fond of fighting. A week ago he was laid up in what we call our Hospital; scarcely able to walk, from a severe blow by a cricket-ball on the cap of his knee. The next morning, when the surgeon came to examine him, our young sufferer was missing; and found, at last, behind the garden wall in single combat with the biggest boy in the school. It seems that words had passed between these heroes on the cricket-ground, just before your son met with his accident. Communications of a hostile nature passed between the hospital and the schoolroom, in the course of which the bigger boy accused the lesser of shamming illness in order to escape chastisement. At this taunt, your young gentleman sends a challenge, and is with difficulty brought back to his room, covered with honourable bruises. 'Hastings,' said I, mildly, 'you might have maimed yourself for life.' 'Sir,' he replied, 'dishonour lasts longer than life.' Pretty bombast for a boy not yet fourteen.

'From this anecdote you may judge that he is very fearless, and on the point of honour only too Quixotic. But I should want candour, my dear Madam, if I did not add that there is another side to the medal. Your son is not an amiable boy. He seems to have little or no tenderness in his nature. He forms no friendships with his schoolfellows; which I think a bad sign, both of temper and disposition. He is inordinately ambitious (sleeps with Plutarch's Lives under his pillow), has much too high an opinion of himself; and, in a word, does not seem to me likely (unless a great change be effected in him) to be popular in domestic life; nor yet to stoop to that subordination, or manifest that respect for

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others, which I have always heard to be necessary to the conduct of any young man who would rise in public life. Still, with such vigour of character, he can scarcely fail to become, one day, conspicuous either for good or ill. I say for ill; because who can confidently predict good from natures, however noble, in which the passions are fiery and the scorn of restraint so strong as to make one fear that it may stifle the voice of duty? Of one thing I feel quite assured. He may, if his powers be perverted, commit many wrong actions, but he will never do a mean one. He is essentially a gentleman. I persist in my former advice to you. Send him to some large public school; where betimes he will be drilled into discipline, and where intercourse with boys superior to himself, at all events in physical strength, and mental acquirements, will humble his notions as to his own superiority. In a word, let him find his level.

'I must prepare you, however, for his own dislike to a public school. I have talked to him on the subject, and represented to him the good he would certainly derive from a public school. But strange to say (for I should have thought him just the boy to like, as well as suit, such a school) I have found him firing up at the very thought of it, and as resentful as if I had proposed to send him to Bridewell. You must not let your maternal tenderness yield to his prejudices on this point. But if you find him in the state of mind I have described, be firm, I conjure you. Believe me, dear Madam, I shall always be most willing to give you such aid and counsel as my long experience may suggest. A boy of a nature so impassioned and headstrong—an only child, and fatherless—must indeed be an anxious charge to a mother. Much in him, it is true, may justify all your pride. But it were vain to deny that much in him also may warrant all your alarm. You have asked me to speak frankly. I have done so. Perhaps, with some bitterness: for the boy has disappointed me. I had hoped to be of more service to him. I admired his noble gifts and would fain have found a friend in my pupil. This he would not permit. And I am now parting with him for ever, half in regret, and half in anger. Often, at one time I have been tempted to clasp him to my heart, and at another disposed to expel him from my school.

'In fact, nothing but my grateful sense of your constant kindness and distinguished confidence could have made me keep your son so long. Now, he has outgrown us all: master and boys. And so, God be with him. I have the honour to be,

'Your ladyship's humble Servant,

'DAVID WORTHAM.'

'Read that!' said Lady Anne Hastings, as she extended, with a hand that slightly trembled, Dr. Wortham's equivocal and somewhat menacing epistle to an elderly gentleman who now entered her drawing-room. ÆT. 18

The 'Read that!' was effective and dramatic. It arrested all preliminary salutation. It cut in half a very profound bow, on the grace of which the visitor habitually valued himself.

'Good heavens!' said the gentleman, 'what's the matter? Nothing amiss with Master Lionel?'

'Read! read!' the poor mother repeated, impatiently; and she turned away to the window, for her lip quivered, and her countenance was very pale.

The gentleman thus appealed to appeared, in ordinary circumstances, to be of an indolent, apathetic temperament. So much so that his enemies called him a Philosopher, meaning thereby a man profoundly indifferent to the weal or woe of the human species in general, and of his friends in particular. But in truth Mr. Christopher Cotton ('Gentle Kit,' as he was more often designated in popular parlance), obtained his reputation for philosophy very undeservedly. He had at least as much feeling as his neighbours; perhaps more than most of them. But he was the quietest creature conceivable, and he did with his heart, as some people do with their money, dribbled it away without making a show. You have only to look at the man, as he stands there, glancing now at Lady Anne, now at the letter, to see what an old-fashioned original he is, and how completely he is encrusted in his quiet, as a snail in his shell; a snail putting forth its delicate, anxious feelers, and longing to draw them in again. The man's very dress was quiet: drab shorts and loose drab gaiters; wide black coat and long black vest, white limp neckcloth and an antiquated profusion of frill; all scrupulously neat, but so quiet! The sight of it would set one yawning. And the face, so benevolent, so pleasant, and, beheld at any moment but this, so serene! A little pensive, perhaps, but of a pensiveness the most patient, the pensiveness of—— No, I cannot complete the sentence. I shall be misunderstood. I shall be supposed to ascribe to thee, O Gentle Kit, the most disparaging and odious resemblance. But a word in your ear, my reader. There is an animal much maligned as to its intellectual qualities, an animal of surpassing meekness. It feeds upon thistles, which never wound it. Observe that animal when it dozes. What pensiveness in the expression of its physiognomy! Such was the pensiveness peculiar to the face of

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Christopher Cotton. Those who wrote to him addressed their letters to 'Christopher Cotton, Esquire;' but he was the only man I ever knew who preferred to that designation (by rights, feudal and military) the peaceful title now only linked to names on mouldering old monuments. Gentle Kit styled himself 'Christopher Cotton, Gentleman.'

CHAPTER II.

'WELL, Marm—'

Mr. Cotton preserved that broad pronunciation of the ellipsis *Ma'ari*, from *Madame*, which was formerly considered high bred, and is still the Court mode.

'Well, Marm, I have read the letter. I can't say but what it has very much relieved my mind. Which I take kind in you as regards the showing it. I was afraid that Master Lionel had the whooping cough, or the measles. And he is coming home. In an hour or two. Which is what I ought to have expected. On account of the Midsummer holidays. Not but what Midsummer is past and gone. Dear me, I wish I had known. I would have brought my fiddle.'

'Fiddle!' exclaimed Lady Anne indignantly. 'But everyone says you have no feeling, Mr. Cotton. Fiddle! when my poor boy's career, his whole existence, is so endangered. And you talk of fiddles!'

Gentle Kit bowed his head to the storm. His heart was galled, not at the accusation against himself, but at the aspersion cast upon his fiddle. Hitherto Lady Anne had respected *that*. Still, he concealed his dove-like resentment, and said soothingly—

'Master Lionel is so fond of music. Which I can't but say I take very kind in him. Seeing that it shows a good nature to bear with an old man's hobby, and—Tut, tut, my lady! Don't grieve! Don't cry, now. There's no cause. Seeing that I've read this worthy gentleman's letter from beginning to end, and though it has a great many big words (which I observe clever people are fond of using when they get bother-headed. No offence to him, poor man!), yet how Master Lionel's career and existence are endangered is more than I can make out, save your presence.'

'Mr. Cotton, you provoke me. So wilful and headstrong—'

'Lord bless you, he'll grow out of all that. Why I myself was a terrible fellow. In the nursery. Which is what everybody

wouldn't suppose. Only think! I've heard my poor mother say that when I was two years old I actually pulled my own grandfather's nose.'

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Mr. Cotton communicated this interesting anecdote of his precocious ferocity with so awe-stricken a voice that Lady Anne could not resist a smile; and, laying her hand mildly on her old friend's shoulder, she said:

'But Lionel is more than two years old. He is nearly fourteen. And if Dr. Wortham, who really likes him, entertains such fears for his future fate, what must I do?'

'Tut, tut! Dr. Wortham is a schoolmaster. I don't much mind what Wortham says. By reason that he is a schoolmaster, and that all schoolmasters see things just like—schoolmasters. What is the matter, after all? That Master Lionel fought a boy for accusing him of having shammed sickness to get out of a quarrel. I don't say it was quite wise in him. By reason that the boy was bigger than himself. Still, he would not have been his father's son if he hadn't done it. And then poor Dr. Wortham says he don't like Latin verses. Well, every man has his hobby, and a schoolmaster may naturally like Latin verses. But I never knew a schoolboy that did. His master says he has abilities and application, and that he is brave and honourable, and a gentleman. And you are to be alarmed at that? Why, bless us and save us! I am as timid as most people. And I never had a son. For which I'm not sorry. By reason that I'm an old bachelor. But, if I had a son, I vow and protest that it would not alarm me at all.'

Gentle Kit, as he said this, loftily drew out his snuff-box, and inhaled a noiseless pinch, with considerable complacency at his own eloquence. And, indeed, it takes so little to make a mother think well of her son that Lady Anne's face relaxed, and again she smiled upon her comforter. But the smile instantly vanished. For the remembrance of one passage in this accursed letter, that had stung her more than all the rest, came across her as she gazed upon the old man's placid, kindly face, and she exclaimed:

'But ah! he says that my boy, my own only child, has little or no tenderness in his nature. And if, after all, he does not, cannot, love me—if he wants heart!' The mother burst into tears.

Christopher Cotton rose. He took one stride across the room, and came back to his friend's side, gently drew her hands from her eyes, and held them both in his.

'My poor lady,' said he plaintively. 'Did you not tell me that

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everybody says I have no feeling? Which I can't say I think civil in everybody. But that's no matter. Do *you* think so?'

'No, no! I was unjust, peevish. Forgive me.'

'To be sure I forgive you, my sweet darling Lady Anne. But if everybody is wrong about me, who have been before everybody's eyes for fifty-six years, don't you think that one body may be wrong about Master Lionel, who has not been in the world fourteen?'

Sometimes Gentle Kit chanced upon a shrewd saying so at variance with his ordinary tone that it rarely failed of its effect. Lady Anne pressed his hand warmly, and he continued: 'What! Master Lionel no tenderness? You did not say that, my lady, when he was present to take his own part. Which, begging your pardon, is what I don't think handsome in you.'

'Boys alter so at school,' said the mother irresolutely. 'What a pity they must go there, where they lose all natural affection! And now, to send him to Eton, or some such dreadful, dreadful place—worse still! I know not what to do for the best. Dr. Wortham says, "Be firm." But surely we should try, not to harden him more, but to soften him.'

'Ha!' said Gentle Kit with unusual animation. 'That's true. I have hit it! We'll soften him. Take my advice. Let him, let him——'

'Let him what?' exclaimed poor Lady Anne eagerly. For the agitation of her friend (an agitation that heaved his chest and checked his voice) made her think him inspired with some divine educational conception. 'Let him what?'

'Learn the fiddle, Marm,' said Gentle Kit.

CHAPTER XII.

(Supplementary and Illustrative.)‘LIONEL HASTINGS’—*continued.*

• VOLUME I.—CHAPTER III.

‘HURRA! Here I am, mother! Dear mother!’ And Lionel Hastings rushed into the room.

No tenderness? O Dr. Wortham! If this be not tenderness, it is something a mother prizes as much. A passionate joy, the joy and the passion of a nature rich and healthful, rushing out from a heart full to overflow, and sparkling from eyes on which then burst that schoolboy’s heaven,—Home Regained, and the dear parent’s face.

Gentle Kit stood by, in quiet, till it came to his turn to be hugged and hauled about. Next, the fat spaniel was tossed up to the ceiling, amidst its own doleful and astonished cries, and Lady Anne’s deprecating prayer. Next, the grey macaw was forcibly plucked forth from its cage, pecking and screaming, with all its feathers stroked the wrong way. Even the gold fish in the glass bowl, a stately gold fish of habits the most sedate and old maidish, was jerked out by the tip of its tail, and patted affectionately on its abhorrent head, before it was restored to its crystal element, there to marvel for the rest of its life at the strange event which had befallen it. This done, Lionel Hastings stood for a moment or two by the hearth, gazing straight before him on the summer lawn outside the half-open window; with dilated nostrils, as if voluptuously inhaling the air of home. As thus he stood, who but a mechanical old schoolmaster could look upon the boy with any feeling of alarm for his future? Future! Why, that young life seemed to seize it as a thing of joy. What power in the bold open brow, with the loose brown hair dashed back from it in wild grace! What firm decision in the high clear features!

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What vivid consciousness of intelligence in the happy dauntless eyes! And the frame, so fitted for activity, exertion, and endurance: a frame light as a Mercury's, from the elastic springiness of its vigour. Such a frame as Hope might wing for the skies, and Genius use to convey to man the messages of the gods. All in the aspect of the boy betokened his Anglo-Saxon blood, with some fierce old drops, perhaps, from that of the wilder Danes. Had you come upon him in the remotest quarter of the world, you would have said at once, 'That is English!' It belongs to the race of those who hope, combat, strive, succeed, everywhere; in the city, in the wild, under the tropics, at the pole; peopling new worlds, renewing themselves for ages; arrogant in the power of self-government, restless from the longing for unbounded range. Fear for that boy's future? You might as well fear for the future of Australasia. Ha! he has caught sight of his old friend, the pony, grazing in the paddock beyond the lawn. And he is off like a shot; is out of the window, has leapt the fence. Away scuds the pony, and away fleets Lionel. Neck and neck—it is a race—there they go—now through grove, now through glade—now out of sight—both of them!

'Mr. Cotton, Mr. Cotton!' exclaimed Lady Anne, 'run after that boy, do!'

'Anything to oblige my lady,' said Mr. Christopher, waving his hand, as he plunged himself into an arm-chair. 'But, as for running after Master Lionel, it is not what is right and friendly to ask. By reason that I am naturally a quiet man, and that I would as lief, save your presence, run after a whirlwind.'

Then Lady Anne rings the bell in agony. 'Preston! John! run, both of you, after Master Lionel. He has gone without his hat, and that dreadful pony kicks! and I shouldn't wonder if he got upon it, without bridle or saddle! Nobody knows, nobody *can* know, what it is to be a mother!'

'There's Master Lionel,' said Gentle Kit, burying himself still deeper in the downy cushions of the arm-chair.

And, sure enough, there *was* Master Lionel, galloping up towards the house on the back of the pony; and the pony snorting so loud that it could be heard all over the house, and lashing out its heels every minute, as if a swarm of wasps had settled on its hind quarters.

As the boy was now trying to force the pony to leap the fence; as Lady Anne was exclaiming at the top of her voice; as the fat spaniel barked and the macaw screamed, 'Upon my honour, my

lady,' cried Mr. Cotton, jumping up, clapping his hands to his ears, and then catching at his hat and cane—'upon my honour, I am a quiet man. Quiet is a great blessing. With your leave, I'll go back at once—for the fiddle!'

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CHAPTER IV.

'MANKIND,' saith a writer who has written on the History of Fiddles—'mankind may be divided into two classes: those who play the violin, and those who do not.' Our author, observing that the former class constitute the minority (which may be said of all pretenders to human excellence), says of the latter (that is, of the herd of men) with a lofty yet benevolent contempt, 'LET THEM NOT DESPAIR. They cannot all hope to play the fiddle. If they respect, admire, and encourage those who *do* play it, that is perhaps sufficient.'

Be respected, admired, and encouraged by thine audience, O Gentle Kit!

Mr. Cotton was not so wrong, after all, in going home for his fiddle. The fiddle produced a very softening effect upon our wild hero, Lionel.

It is now twilight. The boy is seated near the window; his mother's hand clasped in his. His head is bowed, musingly, over his breast: his eyes are half-closed, heavy with dewy moisture and sweet enchanted reverie. And in the deepest shade of the room, the outline of his form vaguely visible, the musician is giving voices of strange wonder to his violin.

So little was seen of the player, and so softly did his modest existence shrink and merge itself into that of his instrument, that one forgot him altogether. It seemed as if the fiddle was speaking from its own melodious impulse; like a bird, like a spirit. Christopher Cotton played well. To be sure, he had played every day, shine or rain, for the last forty years. But practice alone cannot make a fiddler. *Nascitur, non fit*. Christopher was not merely a performer, he was a composer. And, being Welsh by his mother's side, and accustomed to that ancient tongue in his infancy, he had treasured up in his recollection many of the old Welsh airs, adapting them, with sundry modifications and improvements, to his violin. He knew how Lionel loved these airs. There was something in

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them that went home to the boy's heart. For there they touched on a congenial sentiment; devoted, as most of them are, to the praise of heroic deeds, or the lament for departed heroes.

The music now glided off into an *adagio*, soft, mournful, yet not effeminate. It expressed sorrow, but a manly sorrow. The boy's head drooped gradually on his mother's bosom. The music stopped. All was silent. The evening grew chiller, and the shadows darker.

'I should like,' said Lionel, in a very low murmur, 'to do some great thing for England, and then die.'

'Don't talk so, child,' said poor Lady Anne, transported to new fears. 'Pray shut the window, Mr. Cotton. Lionel talks of dying! You have no pain in your chest, my dear?'

'No, indeed, mother. What! You are going already, Mr. Cotton? I am so much obliged to you. There's something in music—I mean in that fiddle of yours—which makes one try to ease one's heart by doing something very brave, or very kind. Oh, stop! I've a present for you, Mr. Cotton.' And Lionel started up, overset the macaw in its cage, and dashed out, calling loud through the hall for his trunk and a light.

'The dear boy!' said Gentle Kit, after he had picked up the fallen cage, and restored it to the stand.

'Yes, he is very good this evening. But you don't think there is anything wrong with his chest, do you? It is so strange to hear a boy talk of dying.'

'A very common effect of my fiddle, Marm. After I have practised an hour or two on Mrs. Graves, my old housekeeper, she always relieves her enthusiasm, I may say, by reading the burial service. Which is what I take very kind in her. Not to say pious. If I may make bold to pass an opinion on these matters. In a quiet way. Not being of the cloth.'

'Here it is! I hope you will like it. It does not please *me*, but I thought it just what *you'd* fancy, these summer evenings, when you go out fishing.'

And Lionel extended a very handsomely-bound copy of Walton's 'Angler,' illustrated.

'Bless me, the very book I've been longing to buy,' cried Mr. Cotton, 'ever since I saw an extract from it in the county paper.' And he gazed on the plates, by the light of the candle in Lionel's hand. He might have seen them as well by the boy's eyes, they shone so brightly.

'But it does not please you? Impossible! Why, and by reason of what, I pray?'

'It's such quiet reading,' said Lionel, laughing. 'I'd as soon fish.'

Here he turned to his mother. 'And I've a pretty set of chessmen for you, dear Mamma, and I've learnt to play, that I may do something to amuse you, when otherwise you would sit thinking and moping. You know you like chess.'

Lady Anne's heart smote her sorely for having doubted her son's love. And she was still hanging on him fondly, long after Mr. Cotton (charmed with his acquisition, and longing to show it to Mrs. Graves) had silently slipped out, and was walking home, by moonlight along the still hedgerows, to his small bachelor's house about half a mile distant.

The servants came in with lights, and the curtains were drawn.

So far, so good. Why could not the whole of that evening pass off as pleasantly? But no. Lionel had introduced the *donum exitiale Minervæ*. That accursed chess-box! *Hoc inclusi ligno occultantur Achivi*. Mother and son sat down to play. Play, indeed! Who ever *plays* at chess? Talk of playing at Waterloo.

Lady Anne understood chess well, for a lady. Lionel understood nothing of the science; but he made the most daring and unexpected pushes towards checkmate, sacrificing piece after piece by the way, and charging up to the king, as Richard III. charged up to Harry of Richmond. His combative qualities became inflamed. He forgot all courtesies, and all good breeding. Filial affection and respect lay dormant. He was not thinking of a mother; he was only thinking of that black king in the corner, by the side of its castle. And when he saw that Lady Anne, taken by surprise and discomposed (as a good fencer is when a man who never before had a foil in his hand pokes it direct at his eyes), paused aghast and bewildered, as she perceived that, with three pieces more than her antagonist, and advancing to victory in the most approved style, she herself was in imminent danger of checkmate, he burst into a fierce joyous laugh, rubbed his hands, and exulted, as his ancestor the Dane might have done at the battle of London Bridge. Lady Anne grew annoyed and irritated. She moved a knight, and then, suddenly retracting, covered her king with a bishop.

'You can't do that. 'Tisn't fair; you moved the knight first. You *must* play it. That's the rule.'

'Don't raise your voice so high, Lionel. It is disagreeable. I didn't know you were so very particular, in playing with a lady, especially.'

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'I am *not* playing with a lady. I'm fighting an enemy,' said Lionel with set teeth.

'Shocking!' cried Lady Anne. 'Well, I've played the knight, since you insist on it.'

The knight was not placed, however, as Lionel had supposed, and as the enemy had first intended, which would have insured him the game. Guarded by a humble pawn, the faithful cavalier frustrated the meditated regicide. In his impatience, Lionel at first overlooked the pawn. His queen took the knight, and to that ignoble pawn her own life was justly forfeit. Then he at once recognised his oversight, and threw himself back in his chair with a stern cry of 'All is lost!'

'Oh, a mere oversight,' said the mother, with true female generosity. 'Take the move back, my dear.'

'I! O mother, how can you suppose it? I would rather lose fifty games than do anything so base.'

'Base! to take back a move at chess?'

'Base to lay down a law for an enemy, and break it oneself.'

'My dear, I really can't take your queen. I must insist on your removing it.'

'No.'

'When I insist, Lionel?' said Lady Anne, with tender reproach.

'No one has a right to insist that I do what I think dishonourable.'

'But, if I say it is not dishonourable, am I not the best judge?'

'No, certainly not.'

'A mother not judge better than a boy of fourteen?'

Lionel swept his hand over the board. 'If those pieces of wood were all the inhabitants of the world, they could not judge better than one's own heart, or make a shabby action an honourable one.'

Lady Anne pressed the matter no more. She was a noble creature herself; and, if her son's reply was exaggerated, she felt that the exaggeration was on the right side. But, as she mechanically restored the chessmen to their box, the warning in the school-master's letter returned with increased force to her mind. Was there, indeed, nothing dangerous in the haughty determination of one still but a child in years, to think and judge for himself? Nothing dangerous to his character, and injurious to his career? Ought she not to take the preceptor's counsel, and be firm? She mused a moment, and then said seriously:

‘Lionel, I believe you liked your schoolmaster. I have always heard you speak of him with respect.’

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‘Yes. He was very kind to me, in his way. And everyone says he is a good scholar.’

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‘But he complains that you would not suffer him to be your friend.’

‘No boy of any spirit can be *friends* with his schoolmaster.’

‘What a very extraordinary notion! Why?’ cried Lady Anne in great amaze.

‘For the same reason, I suppose, that no high-minded man can be *friends* with a king. He can respect, serve, love him even: but friends? No, one is only a friend to one’s equal. To be friends with one’s schoolmaster is like being a courtier, a parasite.’

‘This is the most absurd pride. How do you think a young man can get on in life, unless through the friendship of his superiors?’

Lionel’s face flushed. ‘By allowing no superior,’ said he, loftily.

His mother looked at the proud young face with a mournful earnestness, and there was a long pause. At last Lady Anne said: ‘My dear Lionel, there is no help for it. You *must* go to a public school.’

‘*Must!* But why must?’

‘Because there you will learn subordination. And,’ added Lady Anne, repeating the Doctor’s words, ‘there you will find your level.’

‘So! I understand,’ said Lionel gloomily. ‘The Doctor has been putting you up to say this. Oh yes, he says I am to go to a public school, to be beaten and flogged into slavery! With all my heart. Let them try. But mark me. In three months the whole school shall be in rebellion, or I shall be expelled.’

‘This is too bad, Lionel. Yes, I must be firm. Go you shall, and we will see.’

‘Shall? shall! shall! Don’t say that word, mother.’ And the boy rose hastily, lighted his chamber candle, and, without one kind ‘Good-night,’ stalked off to his room.

‘Ungrateful!’ cried the mother, as the door closed. The word went straight and sharp to the son’s heart, but he did not turn back; and, ascending the stairs very slowly, he entered the room he had occupied as a child.

The moment he crossed its threshold, his face softened. He put down the candle gently and looked round him. The room had been retrimmed and decorated for his return. One or two of those little

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articles of furniture which boys value had been added. A bureau with quaint pigeon-holes and wells. A pretty bookcase, wherein were arranged volumes he had been wont to borrow one by one, now tacitly made over to him: 'Robinson Crusoe,' and the 'Seven Champions of Christendom,' and 'Amadis of Gaul,' and 'Cook's Voyages,' and Pope's Homer. He knew them all at a glance. Every spot in the little room spoke of the mother's provident, tender love. The boy bent down his face, and covered it with both hands. He did not weep; at least no tears flowed. But his frame shook. A minute after he had flung open the door of the room below, and was on his mother's breast.

'Forgive me! forgive me, Mamma! I call you by that name again, as I did when I never disobeyed you. I will go to Eton, Harrow, Winchester—where you will. Anything rather than I should grieve you and be ungrateful!'

'Lionel, Lionel, my own child! you subdue, you melt me. You shall go nowhere you do not like.'

'Then let me stay with you, Mother, and your kind voice will humble me more than all the schools can.'

CHAPTER XIII.

*(Supplementary and Illustrative.)**'LIONEL HASTINGS'—continued.*

VOLUME I.—CHAPTER V.

HAPPY reconciliation! happy night! Remember it long, Lionel. If thou livest to have children of thine own, that memory will return to thee, sweet and bitter. For rarely till we ourselves are parents can we estimate a parent's love, or think how often, in our childish passions, we have galled and wronged it. And then, perhaps, remorse comes too late, and the tear it wrings from us falls in vain.

But when morning brought back to Lady Anne sober and cool reflection, she felt all the weight of her responsibilities, and after much meditation resolved to call in the aid of counsel. The question lay between public education and private tuition. Why not appeal for advice to approved authorities in each? Her husband, Colonel Hastings, had been intimate with his tutor at the University, a gentleman not much older than himself, said to be no mere pedant, but a man of the world. This person had been under some obligations to Colonel Hastings; whose interest had assisted in procuring him the situation he now held, of second master at one of our principal public schools. She learned from Mr. Cotton, who was personally acquainted with this dignitary, that the Rev. Pertinax Tuftee (such his name) was in the habit of paying an annual visit to Lord Dumdrum, who resided in the same county as Lady Anne. This was about the time. She resolved, by Mr. Cotton's advice, to write to him, and ask him to call on the way. Thus she should obtain a sound practical opinion as to Lionel's fitness for a public school. On the other hand, she herself knew of a gentleman who devoted himself to the instruction of a very limited number of young men, and she had every reason to think well of his character and

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talents. He was the son of the clergyman in the parish which boasted the distinguished honour of containing the principal county seat of her father, the Earl of Norvale. She knew that the son had distinguished himself at Cambridge and obtained a fellowship at Trinity; which, with all ambitions thereto pertaining, he had resigned for much love and a small living.

Not long ago this gentleman, styled the Rev. Latimer Highclere, had modestly written to Lady Anne, reminding her of his existence, informing her that he undertook to prepare six young gentlemen for the University, and soliciting, in no undignified terms, the honour of her ladyship's recommendation. She would write also to him, and request him to visit her for a few days. Thus armed on either hand, she prayed to Heaven to direct her choice. Lionel heard of these preparations without a murmur, and, indeed, with seeming indifference. Nothing could be more becoming than his behaviour. But Lady Anne took care not to ask him to play at chess.

CHAPTER VI.

Four or five days after Lionel's return home, a very respectable clerical-looking chariot, unpretending but not shabby, stopped at the door of Mr. Cotton's house.

Now, this house was characteristic of its owner. It stood on the outskirts of a provincial town of some size, but detached and alone; green fields stretching far on the side remote from the town, with a large garden at the back. In front a plot of sward, circled with laurels and other evergreens, divided the house from the high road. And in the corner of the wall, facing this same road, there was built an old-fashioned summer-house, intended to command a cheerful view of the coaches, chaises, droves, flocks, and dust by which the thoroughfare was occasionally animated. The dwelling itself was the very picturesque of quiet. Its dark red bricks, so sober in hue, its porch deep sunken in a central projection surmounted by a gable roof, its old quaint small windows (in many of which antique lozenge-shaped panes were retained, and across which no form ever seemed to flit) all had something prim and cloister-like, but serene and placid. It was a house in which Sir Thomas Browne might have written upon Urn Burial. It was a house of which the owner, you could well suppose, would write himself 'Gentleman,' not 'Esquire.'

When, after a second ring at the outer bell, a staid and comfortable-looking woman presented herself, and replied in the affirmative to the inquiry whether Mr. Cotton was at home, a footman of stern countenance opened the carriage-door and let down the steps: A gentleman, who might be in his forty-ninth year, but who, thanks to a hat of vast brim, black knee-breeches and gold spectacles, looked considerably older, descended from it with much state, and followed the bachelor's housekeeper (for Mrs. Graves it was) into the bachelor's presence.

A room so charming in its old primitive way did Gentle Kit occupy that it rarely failed to strike pleasantly any visitor, however callous to external impressions. Its walls were covered with small wainscot patterns of the time of Charles I. Upon these were hung sundry rare prints, most of them portraits of eminent persons—especially of eminent fiddle-players—in curious old frames. The windows opened to the ground; and, as the aspect was full south, a burst of sunshine poured through them, pleasantly lighting up every nook and angle of the room. In one of these nooks were ranged old china cups and long spiral glasses; in another, books and folios of music. Several fishing-rods, with a landing net and an eel trident, were set in a sort of trophy over a reading-desk in one corner of the window; and, on the other side, behind a screen of stamped leather, you just caught a glimpse of several priceless fiddles, shelved in a glass case. And then, the garden without: such turf! such cedars, with benches under them! Here, the eye rested on an old monastic sundial; there, it wandered on towards a trout stream, bounding the demesne, and musical with a tiny murmuring waterfall. No wonder Mr. Cotton was a bachelor. When you gazed around you here, you could not but excuse him for celibacy. What on earth could he want more in the way of comfort?

The old man was engaged, when his visitor entered, on the fabrication of an artificial fly: to which labour the perusal of Isaak Walton had stimulated his energies. He held out his hand with the barbed hook protruding between two fingers. The wary visitor looked down, beheld, and recoiled in time.

'Thank you, Mr. Cotton, but we will suppose that we have shaken hands. *Davus sum, non Piscis*. I am not a fish.'

'Dear me, I beg your pardon, I'm sure,' said Gentle Kit. 'I really was not aware that the hook was still in my hand. By reason that one grows so absent, living alone. But I take it mighty kind in you to have called. You have not yet seen poor Lady Anne?'

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'No, Mr. Cotton. You begged me to come to you first. And, since it is all in my way, I was happy to be able to oblige a gentleman whom I esteem: a gentleman of ancient family and connected with the Cottons of Maderly. Ahem! Why do you call Lady Anne poor? Not been speculating in the funds, I hope? I did hear she was—poor. Not in want of money, I trust?'

And the visitor's eyes gleamed, with a hard and frosty light, through his gold spectacles.

'Oh no,' replied Kit simply. 'She doesn't want money. That is, not exactly. We'll talk of these matters later. Since you speak of them. Which I take very kind in you. I called her poor, just at that moment; as one may say, because—because——'

'Because?'

'She is—a mother,' concluded Gentle Kit, in a pathetic tone, "soft as descending fleeces."

'Humph! Mothers *are* poor creatures, certainly. The most troublesome, impracticable, nonsensical creatures! creatures that ought to have nothing to do with boys. If one attended to mothers, one would have to shut up every school in the three kingdoms. Well, I guess now. This mother wants to consult me about her son. A prodigy, of course! Never knew a mother's son who was not.'

Gentle Kit heeded very little all the malignant sarcasms upon maternal wisdom implied in these acrid and heartless sentences; but bowed his visitor into a seat. Which the said visitor first carefully inspected (for he knew not what other fishhooks might be in store for him) and then majestically occupied, sitting in it bolt upright. Mr. Cotton drew a chair beside it; and, after a preliminary pinch of snuff, thus began.

'You see, my dear Mr. Tuftoe, I am an old friend of the Hastings family. I have known three generations of them. There was the Colonel's father, a very fine-hearted, liberal gentleman. He might be fond of his bottle. I don't say he was not. But——'

'But he is dead,' said Mr. Tuftoe impatiently, and taking out his large watch, which looked like a watch tyrannically true to the moment. '*Tempus fugit*, sir. Time flies.'

'He is dead, as you say. And time does fly, to be sure. When I think of it—and the Colonel too! How you must have loved him! Everyone loved the Colonel. And you are Second Master of the great and famous * * * School! Dear me, when I remember you and the Colonel rowing together at Oxford—when I paid him that visit—you recollect, sir? He, he! why *you* loved your bottle then. No offence, sir. He, he! And as I was saying, the Colonel——'

'Sir, he is dead too. Pass on to the boy who concerns us. (Nestor was nothing to this man),' muttered Mr. Tuftoe. CHAP.
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'Well, well, I don't wonder you learned men always want to get back to your books. But to the boy, as you remind me. And I take it kind in you, Mr. Tuftoe, to have your heart so fixed on your friend's son. Well, as I knew you would be in the neighbourhood during your holiday time——' ÆT. 18

'On my yearly visit to my friend Lord Dumdrum,' interrupted Mr. Tuftoe. 'Most intellectual man. Devotes his leisure and his princely fortune to science, and has a superb, I may say an unrivalled, collection of Scarabæides.'

'Of what?' cried Gentle Kit, astonished—'of scarry what?'

'Scarabæides. That important body of beetles, sir, which constitutes the chief part of the section Lamellicornes.'

'What does his lordship collect them for? Fishery? I should think they must be a very good bait.'

Mr. Tuftoe disdained to answer the question. 'I believe,' he said, 'you are not a scientific man, Mr. Cotton. Pass we on. The boy, the boy!'

Mr. Cotton, who had been fumbling over the leaves of his Isaak Walton, to see if that ruthless old insect-slayer had made due mention of Scarabæides, now dropped the book at Mr. Tuftoe's querulous exclamation. 'Ay, the boy!' said he. 'And I dare say you wonder, sir, what I have to do with boys. A quiet man and a bachelor. For which, and all other mercies, the Lord be praised. But the fact is—and fewest words between friends the better—that's my maxim.'

'For heaven's sake, practise it, sir! My horses are catching their death of cold.'

'Poor things! I'm very sorry to hear it. And I hope they'll excuse it. But when one meets an old acquaintance—and lives so alone—and that boy, and the dear good mother, get into one's head—and one has known three generations—Lord, how time does fly! Well, but I'm coming to the point. Sit down, sit down. I take it, your school is rather expensive? Eh, my dear Mr. Tuftoe?'

'It is, sir. Schools for gentlemen *should* be expensive. There is no other means of preventing—ahem! an improper mixture.'

'I was afraid of that. But I say, sir, if you should think that Master Lionel will prove an honour to your school, and if you advise him to go to it, which I take it for granted you will, sir—

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could you not, as an old friend of the Colonel's—could you not—eh? eh?

'Couldn't I what, Mr. Cotton?'

'Keep down the expenses—slightly, you know—he, he! 'Tis a fine estate, but so mortgaged. The Colonel served his country in Parliament. By reason of which you have no idea, sir, what a mess his affairs were in. But my lady has her jointure safe. Which I take it is a great credit to the English law, sir. And she saves, and she saves, to lay by, to pay off encumbrances, and educate Master Lionel. And she don't grudge any expense for him. But it all stints herself. And every shilling now will be so much the less when the boy comes of age. Which stands to reason.'

'I understand you, sir. You need not proceed further. In a word, the expenses of * * * school are the same for all, and cannot be cut down. I excuse you, sir, I excuse you. Don't apologise.'

'That's very kind in you,' said Kit, with a sigh, 'and I won't. To be sure, you must know best. But'—(and here he drew his chair closer to Mr. Tuftoe's, putting his lips to that gentleman's rubicund and somewhat unwilling ear)—'but you see, I'm a quiet man and a bachelor.'

Finding that Mr. Cotton came here to a dead stop, Mr. Tuftoe exclaimed indignantly, 'You've told me that before, sir. Is that all?'

'Dear me, I thought you clever men could take a hint at once. A word to the wise. But if I must speak out, why I must. I am a quiet man and a bachelor. And I have no expenses. And no children. For which I am not ungrateful. And so, if you will just put down half the schooling to Lady Anne, and the other half to me—without saying a word to my lady—Why, I shall take it very kind in you. And don't let the boy stint for anything. And, and—that's all.'

'Really, sir,' said Mr. Tuftoe, a little softened, though only despising Mr. Cotton more than ever, 'this is very handsome in you no doubt, but it is quite contrary to all the rules, all the dignity of the Institution. You and Lady Anne must settle this between yourselves. One word more. Is the boy really clever? He has great connections, if they push him. His grandfather, the Earl of Norvale, might well afford to pay for his schooling. And the Earl is a very worthy nobleman. I should be happy to do justice to the abilities of the Earl's grandson—if he has any.'

'Any abilities! Lord love you, they'd make your hair stand on end. But you'll judge, you'll judge.'

‘ And the Earl ? ’

‘ Why you see the Earl quarrelled with the Colonel about politics, and I can’t say he has behaved altogether kind to Master Lionel, or my lady either.’

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‘ Enough, sir ! ’ said Mr. Tuftoe with great stateliness. ‘ I must not hear more of family disputes.’

Here he again took out his watch. ‘ Her Ladyship’s luncheon hour, I presume. At all events I will drop in. Good day, sir. No ceremony, I beg. Pray don’t come out. You are in your dressing-gown ; you may catch cold. I hope the horses will not.’ But Mr. Cotton persisted.

‘ My own carriage,’ said Mr. Tuftoe as he gained the gate. ‘ I always travel in it. Lord Dumdrum insists on my bringing my own horses too. It is convenient. Not a step further. Open the door, Simon.’

CHAPTER XIV.

(Supplementary and Illustrative.)

‘LIONEL HASTINGS’—continued.

VOLUME I.—CHAPTER VII.

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MR. PERTINAX TUFTOE'S carriage entered the lodge gates of Lady Anne's demesnes; and Mr. Tuftoe, putting his head out of the window of it, examined with attention the character of the grounds. Not that he cared a jot for mere scenery. Mr. Tuftoe was neither an artist nor a poet. All he cared to consider was whether the place was one of mark and importance, or of mere ordinary commonplace gentility. Certainly one merit the heads of our great public seminaries may justly claim. They do not condescend to intrigue for pupils. Boys come to them in numbers so great that they need not canvass for the confidence of parents. Mr. Tuftoe, as Second Master of * * * was supremely indifferent (and he would have been equally indifferent as Head Master) whether there were one boy more or less in its playgrounds. But Mr. Tuftoe had a profound constitutional veneration for worldly influence and position. *Voluit episcopari*. He had an indistinct prophetic notion that, by the aid of some grateful patrician pupil, he was some day to wake with his arms in lawn sleeves and his head in a mitre. At this present time he had but two vacancies in his own house, and two candidates for them: one, the son of a rich country baronet; the other, the son of an able enterprising merchant who represented in Parliament a commercial city. Neither of the two, however respectable, came up to the top mark in Mr. Tuftoe's imagination. But both seemed to him more promising than this well-born young gentleman whose school expenses that tiresome old bachelor proposed to halve. Still, Mr. Tuftoe looked out with some languid curiosity upon the grounds of Wardour Hall. And,

as he eyed them, he said to himself doubtfully, 'But it is a place of some importance. Cotton says the estate is fine, though encumbered. Very fine trees, certainly. And the boy is an earl's grandson, and if the earl don't notice him, still the Hastingses have high connections.'

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Doubtless the aspect of the grounds conveyed the idea of hereditary acres. The predecessor of Colonel Hastings, rarely residing at his country seat, and having had the extraordinary good fortune to have the large old Manor House burnt down, had instructed his steward to dismantle the gardens and turn the park to the best advantage, contenting himself with a small habitation which he built by the side of the ruined Hall. The deer had been expelled from the park. The park itself was reduced to a lawn and paddock, and the rest of the ground ploughed up and converted into a farm. But as the road wound through this paddock the limits of the sward were concealed by groups of venerable trees (more ornamental than valuable, otherwise they had not been spared), and their appearance was imposing. The distant hills, too, were crowned with woodland. It was only when Mr. Tuftoe's carriage stopped at the door of a small unpretending house, which but for the creepers trained round it would have been ugly, and which spoke of decayed fortunes—from its contiguity to the charred and ivy-mantled ruins of the old Hall, with their vast fissures and dismal rents—that the ambitious man murmured to himself, 'No, I don't see anything to be got here!'

With this conclusion the Genius of Calculation came to a dead stop. But a voice from that spirit which presides over the gastric juices sighed out soothingly, 'except a luncheon.' Then, with the majestic strut of a gentleman and a schoolmaster, Mr. Tuftoe stepped across the insignificant hall, and was ushered into the drawing-room.

CHAPTER VIII.

MEANWHILE, Mr. Latimer Highclere had been two days an inmate of Wardour Hall. But so little had he taken advantage of his possession of the ground that, after hearing all Lady Anne's doubts and perplexities, reading Dr. Wortham's letter, and making himself somewhat acquainted with Lionel's manners, disposition, and worldly fortunes, he had said candidly: 'Though I am not sure that

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all public schools would suit your son, yet I think that one in which he would have the advantage of being placed under the care and in the house of his father's friend (who would smooth over the first difficulties, and forbear with some peculiarities) would be preferable on all accounts to any private tuition.'

Lady Anne, poor soul, had trembled when she heard this. And she trembled still more when the door opened, and her eye rested on the awful brow of Mr. Pertinax Tuftoe.

Why schoolmasters should have that grand air, why they should impose more upon people accustomed to the presence of earthly dignities than it is in the power of other magnates to do, I know not. But so it is. Awful they are. And Lady Anne could not have trembled more had she been presented to the ghost of Louis Quatorze.

CHAPTER IX.

[THE opening page of this chapter, which described the first meeting between Lady Anne and Mr. Tuftoe, is unfortunately missing. In the next page they are already engaged in discussing the qualities of Lionel; and the comparative advantages of public and private education.]

'Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox were both great men,' said Mr. Tuftoe, with justice and candour, 'and rare exceptions to men in general. No public school can guarantee to any parent the production of a Fox; whether private education is sure to produce a Pitt, it may be invidious in me to decide. I doubt it.'

'My boy is very clever,' said Lady Anne, with energy.

'I was prepared to hear that,' rejoined Mr. Tuftoe, with serene sarcasm. 'And no doubt he has very delicate health, and must be taken great care of. Your ladyship is particular that he should never overheat himself at cricket, and change his shoes and stockings whenever he comes in!'

'Certainly—that is very essential,' said Lady Anne, unconscious of the irony. 'But Lionel is not delicate now. It is not his health I am fearful of; it is his temper. He has such a spirit.'

'So much the better,' quoth Mr. Tuftoe.

'Rather headstrong.'

'Soon cure that, my dear lady.'

Nothing could be more affable and reassuring than Mr. Tuftoe's smile as he said this.

'Oh! but no horsewhip. He would never bear it.'

'I understand,' said Mr. Tuftoe, briefly.

'He is so far advanced in his studies that, I trust, of course, he will not be subjected to that horrid system you call fagging.'

'Impossible to escape, Lady Anne. Every boy must fag at his first entrance. But if he is advanced in his studies, it will be but for a very short time.'

'So I told Lady Anne,' struck in Mr. Highclerc. 'It is a pity that the rule is inexorable, for the young gentleman is a very good scholar.'

'You have examined him, sir, in the Horatian metres, I suppose, and in Greek iambics?'

'No, only in construing. He reads Sophocles and Thucydides with ease, though now and then he makes a mistake in his tenses.'

'Ah! not well grounded! do him all the good in the world to put him back. Nothing so bad as setting boys to read the higher classics prematurely. Had I not better see your boy, Lady Anne?'

Scarcely were these words out of Mr. Tuftoe's mouth when Lionel himself appeared at the window, and, at a sign from his mother, opened it and stepped in.

'This is the gentleman I spoke to you of, Lionel,' said the mother.

The schoolmaster and the boy looked at each other—the boy not with insolence, but with bold and fearless curiosity; the schoolmaster not with disdain, but with an internal resolution that the boy should wear a very different look if once he became a pupil at * * * School.

A short conversation upon Greek and Latin, Lionel's previous method of study, &c., then took place between the two: Lady Anne admiring her son's answers; Mr. Highclerc leaning his head on his hand, and occasionally sighing.

The conversation ended by a request from Mr. Tuftoe that Lionel would seat himself, and write a copy of sapphics upon 'Spring.'

'I hate sapphics,' said Lionel bluffly; 'and what can one say upon Spring that has not been said before?'

'My dear!' exclaimed Lady Anne, in reproof and terror.

The smile of Mr. Tuftoe would have done honour to Minos.

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'Write the verses, if you please, Mr. Hastings; we don't discuss orders at * * *.'

Lionel tossed the hair from his brow and looked up, but caught his mother's imploring eye, bit his lip, and seated himself.

'You have a Gradus, I suppose, Mr. Hastings? You had better get it.'

'I left my Gradus behind, sir. I had rather make a false quantity than have all invention chilled by opening the page upon a set of hack phrases.'

Mr. Highclerc nodded approvingly. Mr. Tuftoe looked bewildered. Then, with an encouraging but Jove-like nod towards Lady Anne, he said softly:

'Don't be uneasy, my dear Madam. We will talk of these little matters of manner and temper by ourselves. But perhaps this is your luncheon hour. Shall we withdraw, and leave Mr. Hastings to court the Muse?'

Lady Anne took the hint, and rang for luncheon. Then, taking Mr. Tuftoe's arm, she led the way to the dining-room. Mr. Highclerc lingered behind a moment, in order to steal up to Lionel kindly.

'Remember you will be classed at * * * accordingly as you write, not with originality, but correctness. Attend to your quantities.'

'But, sir, you yourself said that more attention was paid to this trumpery verse-making than it deserves.'

'You are not to adopt my notions at present, but Mr. Tuftoe's.'

'I will be no impostor. I will be what I am—good or bad,' said Lionel hotly.

And so Mr. Highclerc left him, and slowly passed into the dining-room.

'I have just been telling Mr. Tuftoe that you advise my sending Lionel to * * *,' said Lady Anne.

Mr. Tuftoe, who had been greatly amazed at first on hearing such disinterested counsel on the part of a private tutor (a race that he regarded with great contempt), had, upon second thoughts, considered that Mr. Highclerc wished to palm upon the Royal Institution of * * * a pupil neither docile nor promising. Therefore, with emulous generosity, he replied:—

'And from what I have seen of the young gentleman, I think he would do best with a private tutor.'

'I should so like to hear what you two gentlemen have to say

on the matter,' cried Lady Anne, as the luncheon was now placed on the table. 'You need not wait, Preston.'

The servant retired, and the three were left to themselves to discuss chicken and education.

'What do you consider the great advantages of a public school, Mr. Tuftoe?'

'First, Madam—(may I ask you for a slice of that tongue?)—first, a public school makes a boy hardy.'

'Lionel is hardy enough already, Heaven knows,' sighed the mother.

'Next, it makes a boy a gentleman.'

'Oh! he is that. Dr. Wortham says so. How could he be otherwise?'

'Thirdly'—continued Mr. Tuftoe, who treated all interruptions with supreme indifference—'thirdly, it enables him to form good and useful connections and friendships. Fourthly, it brings him up to be a man of the world. And, fifthly, if he will work hard and become a good scholar, it gives him a distinction on starting into life which, with all submission to Mr.—Mr.—the gentleman here—no private tuition can pretend to bestow.'

Seeing that Mr. Tuftoe here came to a stop, Lady Anne now turned to Mr. Highclerc. 'And what do you think are the especial advantages of a private education?'

'I really do not know whether I ought to state them in presence of Mr. Tuftoe,' replied Mr. Highclerc bashfully.

'Oh sir, I have no prejudices—I suppose there are *some* advantages in the private system. I should be very glad to hear them. May I take wine with your ladyship?'

'The advantages, then, appear to me simply these. In a large public school, all the boys, whatever their differing habits, talents and tempers, must be subjected to one general routine. This cannot be equally applicable to all. In private tuition, the principal can study the character of each boy individually, and train it accordingly. At a public school, a brilliant boy may get on if he chooses: at a private establishment, something may be made of every boy, brilliant or not.'

'Ah, possibly,' said Mr. Tuftoe, 'possibly. (A lobster salad, I declare—nothing better!). Proceed, sir.'

'In a public school, only the classics are attended to, and no attention is paid to English literature and history: in a private establishment, a taste for general knowledge may be instilled. One

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boy may never do much in Latin and Greek, who may yet have a natural aptitude for other acquirements which may serve him in-

‘Serve instead of Latin and Greek, sir? Pardon me there: a classical taste is everything—for a gentleman, I mean!’

‘There is a classical taste in modern letters as well as ancient.’

‘Only to be acquired through a thorough appreciation of—Horace in particular, sir.’

‘And how many boys at a public school thoroughly appreciate Horace?’

‘It is their own fault if they don’t.’

‘True, but at a private establishment, the master takes to himself some of the fault which in public schools is ascribed solely to the boy.’

‘With these sentiments, permit me to inquire,’ said Mr. Tuftoe, reddening, and throwing himself back in his chair, ‘why you recommend that Mr. Lionel Hastings should be sent to * * *.’

‘Because,’ said Mr. Highclere, after a little hesitation, ‘the young gentleman’s former master, who ought to know best his character and bent of mind, advised a public school; and from what I have seen of Master Hastings I should fear that, unless one of the authorities, like yourself, sir, devoted much trouble and care to him, he would not stay long—’

‘Eh!’

‘Or do that credit to his instructors which his mere capacities ought to enable him to do. But as I heard that you, sir, were the particular friend of the late Colonel Hastings, I did not doubt that you would pay your friend’s son that nice, and minute, and watchful, attention which he could not expect at other public schools—in a word, have your eye constantly upon him.’

‘My eye, sir!’ ejaculated Mr. Tuftoe, and paused: he would like to have added, ‘and Betty Martin!’ But he would not condescend to a jest so vulgar, tempting though it was. ‘Sir, you do my eye more credit than it can possibly deserve.’ Then, having now completed his luncheon, and wishing to proceed to Lord Drumdrum, he turned politely to Lady Anne, who had been listening with her lips apart and her hands clasped, looking so fair and so motherlike that she might have softened any man less plagued by mothers than the Rev. Mr. Tuftoe. The schoolmaster resumed in his superb condescending way.

‘Nothing would have pleased me more than to devote myself

night and day to your very amiable and promising son ; but, unfortunately, I have no vacancy in my house. The elder son of my Lord Pimperden, and the third son of my particular friend Lord Dumdum—most intellectual man, whose scientific attainments as a naturalist are doubtless known to you, sir, as a scholar. In Scarbæides, his Coprophagi are matchless, and his Melilophili most interesting, though as yet incomplete. But to return : the sons of these noblemen have just left me, and their places are about to be filled up by the son of Sir Nathaniel Peatacre (immense property in Yorkshire), and the son of Mr. Sterling, M.P. (first-rate Parliamentary reputation). Nevertheless, your son could be very comfortable in the houses of other tutors—not quite so sought after as mine, but unexceptionable. If he lodged at a Dame's, it would be a trifle more economical. Should you decide on sending him to * * *, I shall be most happy to enter his name, recommend to you a suitable house for his reception, and, as you suggest, sir, keep my eye upon him, as often as the other duties of my responsible situation and the claims of four hundred and fifty-three other boys will permit that eye so enviable an honour.' Then Mr. Tuftoe rose, and added, ' With your ladyship's leave, I will ring for my carriage.'

' But I thought at least you were to examine Lionel,' said Lady Anne, in a tone between complaint and indignation.

' I will look at his verses with pleasure—examined he has already been, it appears, by this gentleman. You have been yourself at a public school, sir, I should guess—Rugby?'

' No ! I was educated at home by my father.'

' Ah, I understand now ; not at the University either, sir?'

' Yes, I took my degree at Cambridge.'

' Tried for honours?'

' I was second Wrangler.'

' Eh, eh, indeed ! Your studies, then, were devoted exclusively to mathematics.'

' Not exactly. I obtained the Pitt Scholarship.'

Here Mr. Tuftoe opened his eyes very wide, and, indeed, felt a strange mixture of admiration and contempt at the intelligence conveyed to him—admiration for the learning necessary to obtain such distinction; and contempt for the learned man who, having obtained it, was nothing better than an obscure private tutor. For want of anything to say further, he strode into the drawing-room.

' Well, young gentleman—and the sapphics ? Oh ! playing with the dog. Nothing done, I suppose.'

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'All done, sir, as well as I can.' And Lionel handed a sheet of paper scrawled over with a bold, rude, but very intelligible caligraphy.

Mr. Tuftoe turned first to the amount done.

'Forty verses already. Very good—surprising!'

Then, shifting his spectacles, he shot a glance at the substance.

The first stanza was without a fault—or a beauty.

'Very good indeed,' said Mr. Tuftoe; 'highly creditable.'

The second stanza had two original ideas, and one false quantity.

'W—he-w!' whistled Mr. Tuftoe; w—h—ew! This is a sad fall off! This *e*, Mr. Hastings—this *e* is as long as my arm!'

'The third and fourth stanzas showed that the writer had got warm on his subject; they were written with vigour and gusto; they were the efforts of a mind that comprehended the Poetical, and strove, though with the extravagance of boyhood, to express living modern thought in the dead old tongue. Poetical the verses were, not classical.

Mr. Tuftoe read no more! 'We must go back, my young friend, *ab initio*. Very ill-grounded, I see; boys always are so at private schools. Start fresh with longs and shorts; and the Gradus is not to be despised.'

'But he will not be a fag long?' whispered Lady Anne, much disheartened by the foregoing criticism. Low as was the whisper, Lionel overheard it, and rose so abruptly that the table shook, and the macaw screamed, and the dog barked. Lionel himself remained silent.

'Long! let me see—about a year, I should say—provided he is not turned back.'

'And please, sir,' said Lionel, with his full round voice—'pray, if a fag refuses to do what his master, the other boy, orders him, what happens?'

'His master, I suppose, thrashes him, my good young friend.'

'And suppose that when the master attempted it, he got thrashed himself?'

'Oh, that would never happen twice, my dear Mr. Hastings. One of the monitors would be appealed to.'

'And if the fag thrashed the monitor? I know one at least who would try his best!'

'Lionel, Lionel, my dear!' cried Lady Anne.

Mr. Tuftoe paused. 'Pleasant boy to be always *in* my eye!' thought he. 'I shouldn't wonder if he would be *at* it. I vq and pro-

test that his right fist is clenched already.' Then he said gravely, and with the sense derived from experience: 'My boy, this talk is all very well *here*. But did you ever see a steam engine?'

'Yes, sir, once.'

'Try to stop one of its wheels when you next see it—and you will then know what it is when one boy, or one man either, tries to stop the wheels of a great established system. I see my carriage is come round. Good day, dear lady. I am most flattered by your confidence, and I have been much refreshed by your hospitality. Good day, Mr. Highclerc. To our happy meeting, and better thoughts to you, Mr Hastings.'

'But do you advise me, or do you not, to send Lionel to * * *?' said Lady Anne, following the schoolmaster across the hall. 'You see what he is—what a spirit!'

'Ma'am,' cried Mr. Tuftoe, struggling towards his carriage, 'I cannot take upon myself the responsibility of advice, the consequence may be so awful.'

'Awful!'

'For if flogging and thrashing don't break in that very charming boy's spirit, why he will be expelled, and expulsion from * * * is ruin for life. Explain that to his no doubt excellent understanding. I have the deepest interest in his welfare. Simon, tell the coachman to drive on to Dumdrum Park.'

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CHAPTER XV.

(Supplementary and Illustrative.)‘LIONEL HASTINGS’—*continued.*

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POOR widowed mothers left with wild boys to manage, I pity you from my very soul! Ye can never know what boys are; even we men cease to know when we have left boyhood behind us. They are the most troublesome, anxious, diabolical charges; and yet, if there be any good in them at all, there are such grand elements in the chasms and deeps of that struggling, half-formed, chaotic world which lies in their turbulent hearts. The greatest man that ever lived (I stop not to ask who he be) had some half hours as a boy when he had sublimer dreams and aspirations than he ever knew as a man. Alas and alas! as boys we seem of the race of Titans; how comes it that we grow up into such commonplace mortals? Who would not exchange whole hundredweights of his matured submissive social wisdom for one grain of the old-hero folly of our friend Lionel; braving, in the might of his valiant ignorance, Tuftoes, and masters, monitors, systems, and machines. Pr-r-r! My own cold blood is tingling again. Gently, gently! Pertinax Tuftoe, thou art right; there is no resisting thee, and that of which thou art prototype. Shake hands on it, friend World—no, don't shake hands: I respect thee best at a distance. What a villanous look it has of Tuftoe, our friend World! Drive off to thy Dumdrums, and peace go with thee! I suspect that if Christopher Cotton had, less resembled that thistle-eating, philosophical, quadruped to which I have before likened him, his conference with Mr. Tuftoe would have produced a very different effect, and that Lionel Hastings might have been preferred to one or the other of the two boys whom he now elected to the vacant board and bed at his house.

To judge of the soundness of this suspicion, it is necessary to take a rapid glance at the antecedents of our narrative.

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In the reign of King James I. a cadet of the illustrious House of Hastings had risen into fortune and repute, married the heiress of an old knightly family, styled The Wardours of Wardour Hall, and according to the History of the shire, 'enlarged and embellished the old Manor House, lived in great state and opulence, and died seised of the several lordships and manors of Wardour, Bletchforth, Mapletree, and Storkswold, the which are now enjoyed by the lineal descendants of his marriage with the said Ruth Wardour of Wardour.'

But from the time of Anne this goodly inheritance had gradually declined. The Hastingses of Wardour were a jovial, old English race—hospitable, large-hearted, open-handed—the sort of race that has never prospered much since the days of Anne. The immediate predecessor of Colonel Hastings had, however, been the first of that line who had moved the scene of expense from the shire to the metropolis. He was a man of great natural powers of mind, not without literary tastes, a keen politician, but always in opposition; a good liver and mighty Bacchanalian. It was not the characteristic of his family to do anything by halves. No petty peddling, small, huxter-like vices had they. If they resolved to ruin their health and their fortune, they did it in a proud, mighty way, as befitted their descent from the Plantagenet and Warwick the King-maker. Colonel Hastings had, however, received a careful education. If he inherited the reckless spirit of his ancestors, he elevated its energy at least to higher objects. Not finding sufficient field for his abilities and eager temperament in the army, which he entered on leaving college—for his regiment was not called into service—he obtained a seat in Parliament, and had already acquired a very considerable position therein, when, having triumphed by three votes, and at a cost of 12,000*l.*, in a contested election, he was carried in a chair through the borough, and the day being exceedingly wet and his head uncovered, he was carried on a bier to the family vault about a month afterwards. Colonel Hastings had married for love the daughter of Lord Norvale before he had entered Parliament or thought very seriously upon politics. When he entered fairly upon public life, his opinions were discovered to be diametrically opposed to those of his father-in-law. The Earl was a good man, and a kind man, but he had no notion of any other man, especially a son-in-law, having a will of his own. He at first

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contented himself with cold and disdainful reserve, but the Colonel had the indiscreet infirmity of frankness, and the true Parliamentary appetite for argument. He sought discussion on the points at issue, and the result of the discussion was that the two politicians never spoke to each other again. In fact the Earl had, in his irritation, wounded his son-in-law in one of those points where, to a man of honour, there is no other forgiveness than that of a Christian; which in the modern sense of the phrase, whatever it may mean in the primitive and Scriptural, merely denotes that you don't actually murder the man who has offended you.

The Earl had said that he had been taken in and deceived; and that had he known both the political opinions, and the pecuniary affairs, of Colonel Hastings at first—as he ought to have done—Colonel Hastings should never have had his daughter.

Colonel Hastings, on hearing this, took up his hat and walked from the Earl's house, that day, and passed him in the street without bowing, the next.

When the Colonel died, the pecuniary prospects of his orphan heir were certainly so unfavourable that nothing but the protection which the Court of Chancery extends to orphans of property could have put them into a worse.

Fortunately, however, as the mother was left sole guardian to her son, this appeal to the benignity of that paternal Court was not made. Fortunately, also, her own jointure, and a settlement of 10,000*l.* upon her children by her marriage, were free from the claims of the various mortgagees, annuitants, and creditors who gathered round the estates of Wardour. And now this lady, whom we have seen but in that light most favourable perhaps to her heart, but the least so to her understanding—the light of the anxious, fond, irresolute mother—evinced a readiness and vigour of intellect of which no one could have conceived her capable. Her natural desire was to save to her son the inheritance of his forefathers. She, herself, saw mortgagee and creditor. Some she conciliated by persuasions, others by promises and personal engagements. She surrendered half her jointure to go towards instalments of the debts due to the most obdurate and pressing claimants. She contrived to prevent foreclosures, and maintained the lands intact. And as some who had only life annuities of from 10 to 15 per cent. on the property died off, and as the interest on the 10,000*l.* assured to Lionel as sole child of their marriage accumulated (for this interest, though paid into her hands for his schooling and maintenance, she instantly reinvested on his

behalf), there became a fair chance that, on attaining his majority, he would derive a competent income from the property.

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In all this, and in the general management of the estate, the letting of farms, &c., Lady Anne had found an unexpected and invaluable assistant in Christopher Cotton. Whether it was that he fatigued and prosed people down to his terms, or whether, as we may shrewdly surmise, there was a large degree of innocent cunning and mother-wit under his apparent simplicity, certain it is that no ordinary man of business could have managed for her half so well.

At the Colonel's death, Lord Norvale wrote affectionately to his daughter, and even offered to take charge of Lionel. But he accompanied this proposal with strictures so severe upon the principles, political and pecuniary, of the deceased, and so spoke of the 'poor ruined boy,' with a pity which Lord Dives might have expressed for an infant Lazarus, that Lady Anne could not answer with that degree of gratitude which the Earl thought becoming; and he abruptly declined all further interference in her affairs.

So far, then, Mr. Christopher Cotton had not inaccurately represented the circumstances and prospects of the heir of Wardour. It was true that his inheritance was heavily encumbered; true that Lady Anne stinted herself to provide for his education; true that he derived, and was likely to derive, no benefit from his relationship to the Earl. But there were other and brighter views of his future, on which Mr. Cotton had not expatiated, and which might materially have altered Mr. Tuftoe's estimate of his importance.

The Colonel had been greatly respected and beloved by certain magnates of his party, and with that delicacy and tenderness which are no uncommon characteristics of those patrician politicians who, in struggling for the ascendancy of their opinions, neither desire nor would accept anything for themselves, these eminent persons * * *

[Here there is an hiatus in the manuscript. The pages introducing Mr. Tempest are lost, and the continuation of the narrative begins in the middle of a sentence.]

* * * that he should like to hear every year how the boy went on, that before Lionel came to manhood Mr. Tempest would see him, and that he hoped to like him enough 'to do something handsome for him.'

In subsequent letters Mr. Tempest had plainly requested that

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Lionel might be brought up to views of Parliament and public life on the right side of the question—which Lady Anne took it for granted was the side honoured by Colonel Hastings—and, added this odd kinsman, ‘If his principles are worthy of him (that is, if they agree with mine), I can put him in Parliament and keep him there.’

No wonder, then, that Lady Anne had always looked forward to public life as the future career of her son; and here Lionel did not thwart her.

Without knowing anything of these promises in his favour, he took naturally, and as by the impulse of his temperament, to that grand sphere of strife and action which is embraced in the word Politics, when nobly construed. In his earliest musings over the trite schoolboy Histories of Greece and Rome, he would puzzle himself and his preceptors with questions on problems never solved to this day. Aristocrat and Demos, Patrician and Plebeian, did not pass by his quick bright eyes as mere words. And, when the historical compiler indulged in some edifying moral or apophthegm, deducing effect from cause, or warning the youthful reader of the excesses of ancient commonwealths, with comparisons between Pericles and George III., to the disadvantage of the Athenian, Lionel’s combative mind started up, always in direct opposition to the compiler. At school he loved to argue, to harangue. He got up rival factions of Cæsar and Pompey. He enacted the ostracism of Aristides, and attempted to justify the said ostracism in a long speech that would have done credit to Mr. Grote. He was fond of getting some old newspaper, poring over the debates, and then trying to decide for himself. These inclinations coloured his general taste in literature. He had in him a vivid and glowing love for the Poetic and Picturesque, but the poetry and the picture that pleased him were of no pastoral stream, no Dutch still life. He liked that which had strong human interest and showed men in action, not in repose. Add to these prepossessions towards the very career for which Fate seemed to destine him, a passionate, intense love of country: such a love as is less rare with boys than men; such a love as the glorious old Classics fan into enthusiasm; and you may recognise in Lionel Hastings one of those who are pretty sure to be troublesome to some Ministry or other, and, if they cannot be a Chatham, may hope at least to be a Cartwright.

Now, to return to Mr. Christopher Cotton: had that gentleman fairly stated to Mr. Tuftoe the better and fairer prospects of the

heir of Wardour Hall; had he said 'the Duke of This and the Marquis of That take the liveliest interest in his fortunes; he has a kinsman wondrous wealthy who says he can buy him into Parliament and keep him there; his abilities, such as they be, are all for action;' I do verily believe that Mr. Tuftoe would have found room in his house and heart for Lionel Hastings. 'Not,' Mr. Tuftoe would have inly said—'not that I calculate on any good he could do to *me*; it would be a long time to wait before he could have much influence in the creation of bishops, even of deans and prebends, be he ever so pushed and pushing. But I have a son of his own age, whom he might benefit. Early friendships are often very useful, and paternal affection is far-seeing.'

How Mr. Christopher Cotton, who managed Lady Anne's other affairs so well, came to manage this so ill, I cannot pretend to say; unless, indeed, Mr. Christopher Cotton secretly was of Lionel's side, and wished to prevent his going to a public school, under the idea, not that the school would be too much for him, but that he would be too much for the school.

And if thou didst so opine, and so conduct thy diplomacy, O Gentle Kit, why thou wert not as like our friend the thistle-eater, as Lavater would suppose, judging by the physiognomy.

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CHAPTER XI.

I NEED not say that Lady Anne now resigned the idea of sending Lionel to * * *, and Mr. Highclerc was requested to undertake the completion of the boy's education.

That gentleman asked a few days to consider. 'I should not mind it if I had no other pupil,' said he; 'but if your boy should unsettle them all!'

'Poor dear child!' cried Lady Anne. 'How he is persecuted! I love him all the better for it; and if you do not take him he shall be educated at home, as Mr. Pitt was!'

But happily, if not for Lionel, at least for the dog, the macaw, the gold fish, and the pony, the result of a few private conferences with Lionel persuaded Mr. Highclerc that he might receive his proffered pupil with little danger to the rest of his flock.

He soon saw that he had two strong checks on this impetuous nature: first, in Lionel's punctilious sense of honour; next, in his

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fervent love for his mother. And when, by exciting the last, he obtained from the first a solemn promise that Lionel would implicitly attend to the mild rules of the establishment; and that whenever he thought himself unjustly aggrieved, he would make no complaint before others, but state it to the principal in private, 'as man to man' (that lofty phrase completely won over the heart of Fourteen)—when, I say, this promise was given, and hands shaken on it, Mr. Highclerc had not a fear or scruple left.

But it was now the time of his vacation; it wanted several weeks to the next school term. Mr. Highclerc, whose health was delicate, required himself a holiday by the seaside. And in the meanwhile Lionel was to stay with his mother. The tutor wished to set him some task that would occupy his energies and not displease his taste, and while wondering what this task should be chance favoured him.

Lionel was an English schoolboy, therefore I need not say that he had been taught little or nothing of English history. His passion for political reading had made him, of his own accord, seize with avidity upon such works thereon as had come in his way, but these were chance waifs. It happened one day that Mr. Highclerc made some observations (incidental to Lionel's ancestor, the first Lord Hastings, beheaded by Richard III.) upon the Wars of the Roses, which struck Lionel, and he fell to reading Hume's History. He found this brilliant but rapid work insufficient to satisfy his curiosity as to the leading characters and agencies in that turbulent domestic strife. He came to Mr. Highclerc with his doubts and questions. Now, the Colonel's library had been preserved, and, though not extensive in other branches of knowledge, it was very fairly complete in English History, as became a distinguished member of the English Parliament. Mr. Highclerc took from this library one of the old Chronicles, and, somehow or other, all that had been before shadows grew lifelike to Lionel.

'I should like to read all these Chronicles. I should like to know the history of my own country well—oh, but very very well!'

'Begin, then. That be your holiday task. Here are most of the books you require. Take these folios of Rapin for your general text-book. They are very dull, but more full and important than Hume. Turn to Henry's 'Great Britain' for chapters on Manners, and here are all the principal Chronicles from which the facts in the History are taken: some in very indifferent Latin, some in very

old-fashioned English. But in whatever we learn there ought to be labour.¹

‘Why?’

‘First, because labour exercises all the muscles of the mind, as it does those of the body. One grows stronger in the arm by felling wood than by dangling a cane.’

‘True, sir.’

‘Next, because we remember well and durably in proportion to what it costs us to acquire.’

‘That’s natural enough, sir. I will promise you to labour.’

So when Mr. Highclerc went, he left Lionel resolutely at work on the History of England. And what a history it is when so studied! What enchanted forests, stretching far on into fairyland, open from those trim little hedgerows which our historians in vogue seek to plant in ‘the Past! Into what gigantic proportions arise all those old warriors and churchmen, who seem dwarfed into a catalogue of mere names when we find some mighty reign of romaunt and chivalry, some momentous era of Freedom and Feudalism, compressed into a dozen neat-written pages.

Lionel grew enamoured of his study. He worked at it day and night. The pony had a rest. And at every step he took in the glorious record, England became more dear to him, more a living thing in his mind and soul. Athens and Rome paled before her.

[¹ It will be seen later that this was precisely the direction taken by what my father in his Autobiography calls his ‘first course of serious reading.’—L.]

CHAPTER XVI.

*(Supplementary and Illustrative.)**'LIONEL HASTINGS'—continued.*

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BUT Lady Anne grew alarmed at such intense application. Lionel looked pale. She insisted on his taking exercise and amusement. The County Races were at hand. He must go to them.

We are all of us glad of a reprieve from any study forced upon us; but from a study which we have chosen for ourselves; in which we have found pleasures unexpected; which we have made a companion, nay an actual wife: endowed it with all our goods of thought, and worshipped it with soul and body, we are unwillingly diverted, be we ever so lamblike by temper. I knew a worthy man, an officer in the army, high in station and repute, who never read anything but the newspaper, but in a happy hour he took to netting, and if you disturbed him in the midst of a lemon-bag, heaven and earth rang with his complaint that he could never have an hour to himself for rational occupation.

However, when the day for the races arrived, the pony was brought to the door, and Lionel, who was in the midst of Froissart, saw a white hand placed on the magic page, and heard a soft voice say: 'What, not dressed yet, Lionel? You must make haste!'

Dressed! He was already dressed in mail *cap-à-pie*. And he was summoned to lay by helm and hauberke for ignominious jerkin of blue and trowsers of Russian drill. Lionel had not yet arrived at that age when, as Gil Blas says, 'the toilet is the pastime of the young.' And Lady Anne, with maternal providence, saw that his waistcoat was not buttoned awry, and with her own hands adjusted the knot of his neckcloth.

Resigned, but inly murmuring, the boy was then passively led to his impatient steed. But when the pony, at sight of him, put down

its ears and pawed the ground, and the fresh strong breeze played on his cheek, the natural love of movement and exercise returned to youth. And as he vaulted on the saddle, and the pony bounded forward, Lady Anne gazed on his bold face, and his easy horsemanship, with excusable pride.

His way wound through green lanes, and now and then through short paths cut amidst thick umbrageous woods. Froissart and chivalry were with him more vividly there than in his little chamber. He was a knight on his way to the lists, and a thousand adventures befell him by the road; if all in fancy, why such adventures are the wildest. At last he emerged on the high road; carriages and gigs and horsemen, with many a group of rural pedestrians, animated the thoroughfare, and called him back to existing life. And when he was pacing on the racecourse; saw the stand and the starting-post; saw the caps of the jockeys, and the racers in their cloths; heard the hum and the din, and caught the general excitement—then he became all and wholly in the present. Sympathy with the throng around plucked his heartstrings to the cause of the universal agitation; as it ever must the heart of one who is to become fitted for busy, practical life, and to take impassioned part in the ‘quicquid agunt homines.’

Lady Anne never mixed in the society of the county. Her widowhood and her straitened circumstances were her excuse for declining all the hospitalities at first tendered her, and so they had gradually ceased. On that ground, filled by the residents of the county, in which for birth and hereditary possessions the Hastingses of Wardour ranked among the first, the heir of this ancient house knew not a soul. He was alone in the crowd. But he did not feel his solitude; he was not one who cannot shift for himself; he rather liked it than not. He pushed on his pony through ranks of tall steeds, and darted across files of carriages, with their poles just escaping his own limbs and the pony’s haunches. Lady Anne would have fainted to see the perils he incurred and conquered. He won his way to as good a place for seeing the race as if he had come like the Lord-Lieutenant of the County, in his carriage-and-four, preceded by two outriders. And when the racers flashed and thundered by to the goal, fleetest among those that followed was the pony of Lionel Hastings.

There was something in the life and spirit of the boy-rider that drew on him; in the intervals between the heats, an attention of which he was unconscious.

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One lady in especial, seated in an open barouche near the winning-post, had exclaimed three or four times: 'Who is that handsome boy? He will be sure to meet with an accident. Do look at him. Oh, Lord Dumdrum, do go to that boy's aid! See, he has got into high words with the man who clears the course. That man with the great whip.'

'Breaking must be suppressed,' said Lord Dumdrum, without stirring, 'and if people will cross the course, men with whips must interfere. Otherwise, what is the good of men with whips?'

Not heeding this sage and wise constitutional doctrine, the lady clapped her hands, with a pretty silvery laugh: 'Oh, do look! He has given the man's horse a cut with his own whip, and set the horse off. Here he comes.'

Lionel galloped by, intact and triumphant, and brushing close by Lord Dumdrum's quiet hack, that animal gave a jump which nearly pitched his lordship into the barouche.

'That boy will come to no good,' muttered Lord Dumdrum, as he slowly recovered his equilibrium.

'Indeed,' said a majestic man, who was in a carriage filled with ladies and young people, drawn alongside the barouche—'indeed, that remark is said with your lordship's intuitive penetration into character. I recognise the ill-mannered and presuming boy of whom I spoke to your lordship, as presenting so unfavourable a contrast to the mild bearing of your son John.'

'What? That is young Hastings of Wardour, is it?' said Lord Dumdrum with unusual vivacity. 'I should like to know him. Those old ruins of his must abound with Scarabæides. My great Coprophagus came from Netley Abbey.'

'Hastings of Wardour? Oh, I must know him!' cried the lady in the barouche. 'We ought all to know him. Will nobody go and bring Mr. Hastings here? Say that Lady Clara Manford wants to speak to him.'

There were several equestrians grouped around the barouche, and at this imploring question most of them bowed and cantered off. But the bell rang, a new heat was at hand, and the equestrians forgot the message.

Just as the heat was over, there arose a great hubbub in the vicinity of the barouche. A poor labouring man had been knocked down by a horse in some tradesman's gig, and was taken up insensible. As soon as Lady Clara heard the cause of the agitation, and learned that the poor man was unaccompanied and friendless, she

insisted on his being brought into the barouche. In many things, though not only a fine lady, but a woman of rare genius, Lady Clara had all the impulses of a spoiled, charming, kind-hearted child. And silencing all remonstrances of the Dumdrum party, and the more rational assurance of a sensible yeoman, that it would be much better to convey the man at once, upon a hurdle, to the hospital in the neighbouring town, the sufferer was actually lifted into the carriage, and as soon as, thanks to Lady Clara's salts, he had recovered his senses and stared round him, was questioned in the sweetest tones of female compassion as to his injury.

Now, there was this double peculiarity in Lady Clara: whatever her faults, there was always in them a touch of the Natural; and whatever her merits, there was always in them a touch of the Dramatic.

Thus the one always obtained from friends an indulgent, and the other, from the world, an illiberal, construction.

'My lady is coming the Popular,' whispered a shrewd tradesman with a grin.

'One of Lady Clara's theatrical exhibitions,' said Lady Dumdrum.

'Sentimental,' murmured a man of the world, riding away unperceived.

'Damn'd affected,' lisped a dandy, in the wake of the world.

'What a bore all this must be for Manford!' growled a London formalist.

'She's as mad as a March hare,' quoth a blunt country squire.

And the group, more polished and aristocratic, that had surrounded Lady Clara's barouche, dispersed as by common consent; as, on the other hand, a cluster of the humbler pedestrians gathered and gaped around the wheels, peeping over each other's shoulders, to see what the great lady was really going to do with the poor man.

But amongst these last there had been one unnoticed observer. Lionel Hastings had resigned his pony to the care of one of those itinerant foragers who, in the more retired corners of race-grounds, provide hay and corn for the beasts whose owners are merciful; and the instincts of his nature attracted him towards the spot where he had seen the mob gather. To his young ardent heart there was something touching and sublime in the fair Samaritan's act of charity. He heard with indignation the derisive murmurs in his vicinity. And his own high disdain of mere opinion aroused

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his admiration of the courageous benevolence that dared to shock convention and brave ridicule. Like most clever boys, without being a poet, Lionel occasionally wrote poetry. Some verses, rude indeed, but not without felicitous spirit, shaped themselves in his head as he gazed on the lady and heard the bystanders—verses in homage to the good action, and in sarcasm at those who could misinterpret it. While this impromptu flashed on him, Lady Clara, looking round, and unconscious that her guards had vanished, exclaimed, ‘Come on, one of you, and help to support this poor man.’

Lionel pushed through the crowd, sprang on the wheel, and was in the barouche in an instant.

Lady Clara stared at the boy with surprise, and then thanked him with a beaming smile. ‘He says he thinks his collar-bone is broken; what shall we do?’

‘Drive at once to the nearest doctor,’ answered Lionel, with the practical readiness intuitive to his strong sense.

‘How right you are!’ exclaimed Lady Clara. ‘I should not have thought of that.’

Lionel, meanwhile, had taken on himself to order the coachman to proceed to the neighbouring town, and the carriage drove off, scattering the mob to the right and left. Some of the commoner people, then seeing that the right thing was done, took off their hats and cheered. Lady Clara bowed her graceful head, with a flush of pleasure on her cheek. Lionel, impassive and unmoved, continued to question the sufferer. Nothing was said by either lady or boy to each other, though they both spoke to their charge, who began to be exceedingly disturbed at his novel situation, and, forgetting his pain, could only reply by apologies of the most bashful character.

They soon arrived at the town, and stopped at a surgeon’s door. The surgeon was luckily at home. The poor man was lifted out and examined. No bones were broken, but he had received some severe bruises. Lady Clara entreated the surgeon to keep the man in his own house for a day or two, as the latter came from a distance; and emptied her purse into the hands of the sufferer; who, more and more bewildered, thought he had never made so good a day’s work, and inly resolved that he would never miss a race again as long as he lived. Meanwhile, Lionel, meaning here to take his leave of Lady Clara, had taken advantage of pen and ink in the surgeon’s parlour to dash off his verses, and, thrusting them into the lady’s hand as she was getting into the carriage, cried, ‘Good-bye; I must be off now;’ and so passed down the street.

Lady Clara looked after him as she got into the carriage, and then glanced with curiosity at the paper. Could the boy have made her a declaration of love? Just like him, she thought. However, when she read the verses, she felt more sensibly flattered than by the former unjust supposition. And, accustomed though she had been to similar compliments from the most eminent poets of her age—compliments intimating praise more usually gratifying to human vanity than that bestowed upon simple goodness—there was something in the schoolboy's bold honest lines that went deep to her heart.

'Drive after that young gentleman,' she cried out to the coachman; 'make haste, he will be out of sight.'

The coachman lashed his horses, and ultimately reached Lionel half-way between the town and the racecourse.

'Oh, Mr. Hastings,' cried Lady Clara, putting her head out of the carriage, 'we must not part thus. I have so much to say to you; and William (meaning Mr. Manford) knew your father so well; he would be so sorry to miss you—and dear Lady Anne; we used to meet at my Aunt Espingdale's. Come in, do. Let down the steps, Henry.'

The footman let down the steps. But Lionel lingered at the door of the carriage, and, for the first time in his life, felt shy. Lady Clara however insisted, and he got in slowly.

She then thanked him for his verses with a grateful delight that seemed almost infantine: and, indeed, she had with her at times a pretty infantine way that graver years had found irresistible. Then, with that tact which women of the world excel in, addressing him, not as the mere schoolboy, but the young man, she began praising his living mother and his lost father, and the fine old ruins of Wardour Hall, saying, in short, all that could best put him at his ease, and rouse his self-esteem. Lionel made but short replies and with heightened colour. It is strange, but true, that boys the boldest in the playground are often shyest in the drawing-room; and even men, dauntless with their own sex, acknowledge by timidity the softening influence of women. Lionel, unaccustomed to other female society than that of his mother, and rather ashamed of his verses, now that the enthusiasm that created them had cooled, wondered to find himself so abashed. But Lady Clara perhaps only liked him the better for his embarrassment.

When they regained the race-ground, the crowd was dispersing; the races were over. Lionel now wished to get on his pony and

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return home. But just as he began to stammer out something to that effect, several horsemen surrounded the carriage. Now that the poor man was got rid of, the flatterers returned; and they who had shunned to share ridicule were loudest in compliment. Lady Clara received all eulogies and questions with polished but careless irony; and then, with that marked tone and manner by which persons of high station commend those they desire to distinguish, she introduced her young friend, Mr. Hastings, to the principal persons that thronged around her. Some of them were the leading magnates of the county; some, fine gentlemen from London, guests at various country houses.

'But most of you,' she said, 'will have time to make his acquaintance, for he is coming to stay a few days with us.'

Lionel then felt as all schoolboys would. He could not make a parade to these strangers of his filial duty, and say he must go home to his mother; and somehow or other, without any voice of his own in the matter, he found himself a few minutes afterwards on the road to Manford Park, while a groom was commissioned to take back the pony to Wardour with 'Lady Clara's compliments to Lady Anne, and she had run away with Mr. Lionel Hastings.'

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LADY ANNE, though disappointed at not seeing Lionel at dinner, was on the whole gratified to learn that he was in such good hands. Mr. Manford, who had been intimate with her husband, was universally esteemed for his character and talents—in every way a most desirable acquaintance for Lionel. Lady Clara, though one of those eccentric, dazzling persons, of whom quiet secluded women are in awe, was yet a lady to whom mothers would willingly trust a boy, though they might be reluctant to confide a girl. Her eccentricities could not injure, by example, our ruder sex. And her manners could scarcely fail to refine and polish. It was good for the heir of Wardour to make acquaintance with the notabilities in his own county; good for the future aspirant to public life, to enlist the interest and favour of persons like William Manford.

So, *dakruon gelasasa*, with a smile and a tear, Lady Anne made up, with her own maternal anxious hands, a little packet of all that Lionel could need for a few days, and despatched it at once

to Manford Park, with a courteous line of thanks to Lady Clara, and a note to Lionel, assuring him that she was happy he had so pleasant a reprieve from his books, and reminding him of the necessity of changing his dress for dinner.

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This done, she sent for Mr. Cotton to drink tea with her, and discuss the new event in her son's existence.

[Here the manuscript ends.]

BOOK III.
COLLEGE

1821—1825

CHAPTER I.

(*Autobiographical.*)

LIFE AT CAMBRIDGE. 1821—1825. ÆT. 18—21.

THE college selected for me was Trinity, at which my two brothers had preceded me. My private tutor, Mr. Fisher, was especially distinguished as a Greek scholar. His versification in that language was excellent. He was not, however, a very skilful or attentive teacher. In our lecture-rooms one face instantly arrested my eye : a face pale, long, worn, with large eyes and hollow cheeks, but not without a certain kind of beauty, and superior to all in that room for its expression of keen intelligence. The young man who thus attracted my notice was Winthrop Mackworth Praed ; the editor and the most sparkling contributor to a magazine set up at Eton, and called the *Etonian* ; a scholar of remarkable eloquence and brilliancy, carrying off, in the course of his University career, prizes in Greek, Latin, and English ; the readiest and most pungent speaker at the Union Debating Society ; the liveliest wit in private circles ; in a word, the young man of whom the highest expectations were formed, and who, from the personal interest he excited, was to the University what Byron was to the world. The first term I spent at Cambridge was melancholy enough. My brothers had given me a few letters of introduction to men of their own standing, older than myself, but not reading men. Quiet and gentlemanlike they were, but we had no attraction for each other. I found amongst them

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no companion. I made no companion for myself. Surrounded by so many hundred youths of my own years, I was alone. The formality of the crowded lecture-rooms chilled me. No occupation pleased. When I returned home, I resolved to make a desperate effort to obtain for my listless mind some object of intellectual interest. I chose the 'History of England.' I had no one to direct my studies or enlighten my views. But I took Rapin's dry, grand, work for the main road of my researches, and diverged by the way into chronicles and memoirs; seizing, wherever I could lay my hands on them, upon the authorities referred to. I filled commonplace books with comments and abridgments. This was the first subject to which I had ever grappled with the earnest spirit of the scholar.

My second brother, Henry, who had quitted the University, now resolved to return to it. He had before him the prospect of the handsome fortune bequeathed to him by his grandmother. On returning to Cambridge, his object was not distinction but enjoyment. He would no longer be a pensioner at studious Trinity, but a fellow-commoner at extravagant Downing; a new college, at which the fellow-commoners were considered to be the 'fastest men' of the University.

I, too, had taken, from other causes, a deep and most unreasonable disgust to Trinity. Its numbers alone sufficed to revolt the unsocial and shrinking temper that had sicklied over my mind. The enforced routine of lectures, in which I found (proud fool that I was!) little to learn, stupefied me for the rest of the day. One of the college tutors, a rude and coarse man, had said something to me (I forget what) which I thought unjust at the time; and, as the tone was offensive, I had replied with a haughtiness that augured ill for a quiet life with that dignitary; who has since become an archbishop.¹

[¹ No doubt Thomas Musgrave, translated from Hereford to York in November 1847. He owed his promotion to causes which, neither at the time nor subsequently, were apparent to the public.—L.]

In a word, I urged my mother to let me remove to a smaller college as a fellow-commoner. Long was the debate on this point, but at length I carried it; and with the ensuing term I entered myself at Trinity Hall.

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I had not been three days in that comparatively small society before I found the benefit of the change. As a fellow-commoner at a non-reading college, I found ready dispensation from the morning lecture-rooms. I had my forenoons to myself in quiet, comfortable chambers, and peace and the sense of dignity returned to me with the consciousness of liberty and independence.

My brother Henry became my chief companion. He led a gay life at Downing. His passion then was in horses and landau-driving. He had the handsomest stud, perhaps, Cambridge ever saw. He mounted his friends, myself amongst the number, and in our long brisk rides I felt once more that I was young. But he only stayed at Downing one term, and not long afterwards his love of rambling and action led him into a journey to Greece, upon an undertaking which connected him with political affairs. After he went, my principal friend was a pupil with myself at Trinity Hall (the only reading pupil there), Alexander Cockburn. His father was British Minister at Stuttgart, and at the time I write he himself is Attorney-General under the administration of Lord Aberdeen.¹

[¹ In the administration of Lord Aberdeen, from the date of its formation (December 28, 1852) to its resignation (January 30, 1855), Sir Alexander Cockburn held (for the second time in his life) the office of Attorney-General; and this Autobiography must have been written some time between these two dates; probably in 1853 or 1854. On the letters from the late Chief Justice preserved by my father, he endorsed the following memorandum: 'I was at Trinity Hall with him. We were there great friends. This continued for several years. Then we became temporarily estranged at a time when both of us were struggling against great difficulties, and I found myself seriously involved in some of his embarrassments, for which I did not make sufficient allowance. I have always regretted this, but it made no permanent change in our affection for each other. His great talents cleared his way, and triumphed over all obstacles before he attained middle age. A man of fine qualities, with native instincts of justice, and a horror of all oppression and falsehood. Frank, quick-tempered, even fiery. An admirable extempore

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He is very little altered in appearance, perhaps not much in mind. Cockburn was the first young man combining both superior intellect and studious temper with whom I had ever associated. My brother William, indeed, possessed no inconsiderable natural powers; weighty sense, clear judgment, capacities for whatever business he undertook, fair acquaintance with the classics, and a facility for expressing himself with ease and polish in his native language. But he had no pretence to be a reading man. He was essentially indolent. Henry had then given little indication of the remarkable abilities he has since developed. Life has been his best preceptor. Though not without the ardour for knowledge, his reading was extremely capricious and desultory; and at that time horse-dealers, coachmakers, and tailors absorbed the larger share of his attention. Cockburn was older than myself; had seen much of the world, been originally intended for the diplomacy, knew intimately French and German. Deficient in classical information, he now toiled hard to acquire it. And his mornings and nights were spent in diligent methodical study; but in the hours of recreation he was singularly joyous and convivial. He had a frankness of manner and a liveliness of conversation that stole away all my reserve. Nor was he without gravity and tenderness of sentiment. His companionship was eminently useful to me at that critical period of my life.

And now occurred an event which has had much to do with my subsequent career in the world. Cockburn belonged to the Union Debating Society. At his persuasion I entered

speaker; owing much to a singularly musical voice and collected earnestness of delivery. A powerful advocate; and, I am told, an excellent judge. A very good linguist, with some literary taste. Social, genial, warm-hearted, fond of women; to whom he owed most of his difficulties. An intellect brilliant, yet solid, and a character exceedingly loveable.' The author's letters to the late Chief Justice have been destroyed. Of Sir Alexander Cockburn's letters to him the majority are upon matters of no public interest; but all of them exhibit a remarkable tenderness and depth of feeling, combined with uncommon vigour of intellect and character. The correspondence long maintained between the two men could not have been more affectionate and unreserved had they been brothers.—L.]

it. An attack of a personal nature, for some alleged misdemeanour in the honorary office of Treasurer to that famous Club, was made upon Praed; and the attack excited more sensation because it was made by one who had been his intimate personal friend—Robert Hildyard, now eminent as a barrister. The interest I felt in Praed animated me to the effort to defend him; and I rose late one evening, and spoke in public for the first time. My speech was short, but it was manly and simple, spoken in earnest, and at once successful.

At the close of the debate, the leading men of the Union introduced themselves to me. I had become, as it were, suddenly one of their set. I had emerged from obscurity into that kind of fame which resembles success in the House of Commons. The leading men in the Union were the most accomplished and energetic undergraduates of the University. From that time, I obtained what my mind had so long unconsciously wanted—a circle of friends fitted to rouse its ambition and test its powers; an interchange of stirring practical ideas. I did not speak again at the Union till the following term, and then I fairly broke down in the midst of my second speech. So much the better. Failure with me has always preceded resolution to succeed. I set myself to work in good earnest, and never broke down again; but, though my speeches were considered good, and more full of knowledge than those of most of my rivals, it was long before I could be called a good speaker. I wanted the management of voice, and I was hurried away into imperfect articulation by the tumultuous impetuosity of my thoughts. My first signal triumph was on the Conservative side of the question. The subject of debate was a comparison between the English and American political Constitutions. Praed, and most of the crack speakers, asserted the superiority of Republican institutions. Poor Great Britain had not found a single defender till, just as we were about to pass to the vote, I presumed to say a word in its favour. Then followed the rapturous intoxication of popular

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applause, and the music that lies in the uproarious cheers of party. From that hour I took rank among the principal debaters of the Club, and I passed through the grades of its official distinctions, as Secretary, Treasurer, and President.

There was then excellent speaking at that Club. Men came from London to hear us. First in readiness and wit, in extempore reply, in aptness of argument and illustration, in all that belongs to the 'stage play' of delivery, was unquestionably Praed; but he wanted all the higher gifts of eloquence. He had no passion, he had little power; he confided too much in his facility, and prepared so slightly the matter of his speeches, that they were singularly deficient in knowledge and substance. In fact, he seemed to learn his subject from the speeches of those who went before him. Cockburn came next in readiness; but, though he had more vigour than Praed, he wanted his grace—was sometimes too florid, sometimes too vulgar. Charles Villiers, renowned in Corn-Law polemics; Charles Buller, clever, but superficial—always wanting earnestness, and ironically pert; Wilson and Maurice, since honourably known in literature; Tooke (who died young), the son of the Political Economist; all gave promise of future distinction. Later, there came to the University an ardent, enthusiastic youth from Shrewsbury, a young giant in learning, who carried away the prize from Praed—Benjamin Hall Kennedy, now head-master of the school he had distinguished as a pupil.¹ He, too, spoke at the Union.

But the greatest display of eloquence I ever witnessed at the Club was made by a man some years our senior, and who twice came up during my residence to grace our debates—the now renowned Macaulay. The first of these speeches was on the French Revolution; and it still lingers in my recollection as the most heart-stirring effort of that true oratory which seizes hold of the passions, transports you from yourself, and

[¹ No longer head-master of Shrewsbury. He is now Regius Professor of Greek at Cambridge, and Canon of Ely.—L.]

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identifies you with the very life of the orator, that it has ever been my lot to hear; saving, perhaps, one speech by O'Connell, delivered to an immense crowd in the open air. Macaulay, in point of power, passion, and effect, never equalled that speech in his best day in the House of Commons. His second speech, upon the Liberty of the Press, if I remember rightly, was a failure.

During these visits to Cambridge, I became acquainted with Macaulay. I remember well walking with him, Praed, Ord, and some others of the set, along the College Gardens; listening with wonder to that full and opulent converse, startled by knowledge so various, memory so prodigious. That walk left me in a fever of emulation. I shut myself up for many days in intense study, striving to grasp at an equal knowledge: the trophies of Miltiades would not suffer me to sleep.

[Among the papers of my father which form no part of his Autobiography is the commencement of a second sketch of the gifted Praed. The fragment ends abruptly with the opening words of a sentence; but it is, in some respects, fuller than the portrait in the Autobiography, and I append it here on account of the interest attaching to a man whose bright and varied talents obtained him a reputation in the University greater, perhaps, than was ever accorded to an undergraduate before or since. That his subsequent course did not sustain his precocious promise was probably due, in part, to the enervating disease which slowly undermined his constitution, and caused his death before he was forty years of age.

A common interest in that debating society brought together in joyous social life the most ardent and ambitious youths of the University. What robust and sanguine society exhilarated the suppers to which we adjourned from our mimic senate! There, foremost in ready wit, as the hour before he had been in brilliant extempore eloquence, was Winthrop Mackworth Praed. There was a fascination in the very name of this young man which eclipsed the repute of all his contemporaries. Sweeping away prizes and

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scholarships from the competition of perhaps sounder and more copious learning; the quickest and easiest debater in the Union, without study or preparation; carrying everywhere into our private circles a petulant yet graceful vivacity; matchless in repartee; passionately fond of dancing; never missing a ball, though it were the night before an examination; there was in his mind a restless exuberance of energy and life, all the more striking from its contrast with a frame and countenance painfully delicate and marked by the symptoms of consumption. He excited at the University the same kind of haunting personal interest that Byron was then exciting in the world. All were fond of speculating about his future. For the outlines of his genius were not definitely marked. They vanished away when you sought to seize them. Would he be most renowned as poet, or wit, or essayist, or orator? Most probably the last. A political career seemed to be his natural destiny. With all these high animal spirits and strong tendencies, Praed's moral habits were singularly pure. Not more immaculate from the stain of the softer errors was the reputation of William Pitt. Like Pitt, he loved wine; but not to the same excess. Like Pitt, the year before the latter entered Parliament, his eager nature could be allured by high play; but too rarely to fix on him the character of a gamester. Yet gossip, ever busy in collecting anecdotes of his sayings and doings, never accused him of the looser follies to which youth is the most prone. And yet, with all my genuine admiration of Praed (and no one, I think, esteemed him more highly than I did), there were touches in his character, tones in his mind, which, whenever I came into contact with them, chilled the sympathy, checked the affection, and sometimes even lowered the estimation, with which I regarded him from the first hour of our acquaintance with each other. For instance—

Nor can I forbear to add the passage from my father's poem of 'St. Stephen's,' in which he once more commemorates the University triumphs of this 'bright creature,' as he calls him, who was the pride and delight of his contemporary academic world. After an apostrophe to Charles Buller, it continues:

More richly gifted, tho' to him denied
 Ev'n thine imperfect honours, *Winthrop* died;
 Died—scarce a promise of his youth redeem'd,
 And never youth more bright in promise seem'd.

Granta beheld him with such loving eyes
Lift the light lance that struck at every prize ;
What the last news ?—the medal Praed has won ;
What the last joke ?—Praed's epigram or pun ;
And every week that club-room, famous then,
Where striplings settled questions spoilt by men,
When grand Macaulay sat triumphant down,
Heard Praed reply, and long'd to halve the crown.]

ÆT. 18-21

CHAPTER II.

(Autobiographical.)

END OF COLLEGE LIFE. 1825. Æt. 21.

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I took my degree at a by-term, and, I believe, with more approving marks than any of the others who passed that very easy examination. But though I did not try for honours, I had established among my contemporaries a general reputation for ability and somewhat extensive reading.¹ I took my leave of the Union in a speech on the Game Laws, long remembered and cited as among the most effective which had been heard in my time at that famous debating club. Shortly before I quitted the University I tried for the gold medal accorded to the English prize poem—the subject ‘Sculpture;’ and it was adjudged to me after my departure, and while I was in the midst of the London season. I went down to Cambridge to deliver it. I had more pleasure, perhaps, in that first literary success than in any I have known since. But my chief pleasure was in the thought that I had at last done something my dear mother was proud of. It was somewhat ominous of the reception I have met with all my life, up to this day, from the writers of the periodical press, that, contrary to all precedent as to the passive in-

[¹ In addition to English History and Political Economy, the subjects which most attracted my father, at this time, were Metaphysics and Old English Literature. Whilst at Cambridge he joined a club set up there for the purchase of old English books, under the auspices of Professor Malden and Whewell, the late Master of Trinity, who was then an eminent Fellow of that college.—L.]

dulgence shown to academical prize poems, my verses were selected for a lampoon in the earlier numbers of 'Fraser's Magazine'—a lampoon not confined to the verses, but extending to the author. That magazine, under the auspices of Dr. Maginn and Mr. Thackeray, long continued to assail me, not in any form that can fairly be called criticism, but with a kind of ribald impertinence offered, so far as I can remember, to no other writer of my time.

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About this time I sketched the outline of the 'Tale of Falkland,' and wrote the commencing chapter of 'Pelham.' I do not think that the idea of publishing either was then in my mind; but they were begun as experimental exercises in the two opposite kinds of fiction—the impassioned and sombre, the light and sportive.

CHAPTER III.

(Supplementary.)

UNION DEBATES AND COLLEGE CONTEMPORARIES.

1823-5. ÆT. 20-21.

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[THE preceding chapter closes my father's account of his life at Cambridge; and, in order not to interrupt his narrative, I have reserved for supplementary chapters all the explanatory and illustrative matter connected with this part of his Autobiography.

The prize poem which gave a glow to the termination of his academic career was pleasantly associated with his friend Alexander Cockburn. It was he who made the copy sent in to the authorities who adjudged the prize; and it was he also who first conveyed to its author the news of his success. At the banquet given to Charles Dickens on November 2, 1867, the Lord Chief Justice, in proposing the health of Lord Lytton, who took the chair on that occasion, made public allusion to this circumstance, in language which reflects his lifelong friendship for my father.

I should be ashamed (he said) to advert to anything which is personal to myself, and yet I trust you will forgive me for saying, that when this toast was committed to my care it was to me a source of infinite gratification and delight. It bridges over the chasm of years; it takes me back to the period when the noble lord and I were young in life, and starting upon our several careers. To me, and I believe to me alone—then his college companion—the noble lord confided that he was composing that beautiful poem which was crowned by the academic prize; I mean that poem on Sculpture,

which, to my mind, remains the most beautiful of all the poems of its class. To me he communicated that fact, and I had the immense gratification of being the first to announce to him, as he had left the University when the prize was adjudged, that he had triumphed over all his competitors.

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The Chief Justice, however, must have spoken with the partiality of affection if, when he made this speech, he had read the prize poem written by the present Poet Laureate; the only exercise of that kind, perhaps, which, from beginning to end, is genuine poetry.

At the time when my father was a member of the Union Society at Cambridge, the meetings of that famous debating club, were held in the back room of an hotel in the Petty Cury. It has been described by Praed in an unpublished squib, from which the following lines are quoted by Mr. Skipper, in his interesting account of the Cambridge University Union.

'The Union Club of rhetorical fame
Was held at the Red Lion Inn;
And there never was Lion so perfectly tame,
Or who made such a musical din.
'Tis pleasant to snore at a quarter before,
When the chairman does nothing in state,
But 'tis heaven! tis heaven to waken at seven,
And pray for a noisy debate.'

From this locality, which, according to Lord Houghton, was 'little better than a commercial room,' the society first migrated to more commodious premises built for it in Jesus Lane. Subsequently (1850) it occupied, in Green Street, rooms now appropriated to the Cambridge Reform Club; and its present spacious and handsome quarters, which, says Mr. Skipper, 'were erected at a cost exceeding ten thousand pounds,' were first opened in 1866; the society being indebted for them, says the same authority, 'mainly to the labours of Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. R. D. Benett, both of Trinity Hall.'

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The first occasion in reference to which Mr. Bulwer's name appears upon the Minutes was a debate opened, November 18, 1823, by Mr. Farish, of Trinity College, on the following question, proposed by Mr. Hildyard :—

‘Is a systematic opposition to the measures of Administration conducive to the happiness of the people?’

Mr. Bulwer and his friend Mr. Cockburn were among the speakers on the affirmative side of the question, which was carried by a majority of 57. The next year (March 30, 1824) he himself proposed the subject of debate, and opened the discussion. The question was: ‘Whether the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in 1794 was justifiable?’ He maintained that it was not; was supported in that opinion by Ord; and was outvoted by a majority of 22. On May 3, 1824, the society, at its first Summer Term meeting, proceeded to the election of new officers; when Mr. Cockburn was unanimously elected to the office of President, and Mr. Haughton to that of Treasurer. Mr. Watson Thornton was proposed by Mr. Farish, and Mr. Bulwer by Mr. Haughton, for Secretary. Upon a ballot Mr. Bulwer was declared duly elected. The following question was then debated :—

‘Upon a general review of the leading measures of his Cabinets, can George III. be considered a monarch who favoured and enlarged the liberties of the subject?’

The debate was opened by Mr. Hildyard. Amongst those who spoke in the negative were Bulwer, Ord, and Kennedy. But the affirmative view of the question was carried by a majority of 32. The same year, on May 25, Mr. Townshend, of King's College, proposed the following question :—

‘Is the impress of seamen in this country a justifiable measure?’

The speakers in the affirmative were Messrs. Rawlinson and Helps,¹ Trin. Coll.; Jackson, Trin. Hall; and Clinton, Caius Coll. Those in the negative were Messrs. Townshend, King's

[¹ Thomas, elder brother of Arthur, Helps.—L.]

Coll.; Tooke and Wilson, Trin. Coll.; Bulwer and Aldridge, Trin. Hall; Churchill, Pet. Coll.; Rowe, Jesus Coll.; Hildyard, Cath. Hall. And although the approval of the measure appears to have been represented by a minority of speakers, it was affirmed by a majority of four votes. On November 2, in the same year, the question for debate was—

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‘Whether the Constitution of England or that of America was to be considered most favourable to the liberties of the subject?’

This was obviously the occasion referred to by my father in the passage of his Autobiography where he says, ‘My first signal triumph’ was on the conservative side of the question.’ The debate was opened by Mr. Hildyard of Catherine Hall. On the first night the speakers were:—For the American Constitution, Messrs. Hildyard, Cath. Hall; Praed, Trin. Coll. For the English Constitution, Messrs. Thornton, Trin. Coll.; Kennedy, St. John’s. It was adjourned to Tuesday, November 9, 1824, and on that occasion the speakers were:—For the English Constitution, Messrs. Kennedy, St. John’s; Bulwer, Trin. Hall; Haughton, Pemb. Coll. For the American Constitution, Messrs. Cockburn, Trin. Hall; Ord, Trin. Coll.; Smith, C.C.C. This debate seems to have interested a large number of members, for the voting was:—For the British Constitution, 109; for the American, 87. Majority, in favour of the British, 72. On November 30, 1824, my father again spoke on the question—

‘Did the Revolution in 1688 sufficiently consult the interests of the community?’

It was proposed and opened by Mr. Tooke, of Trinity College, and the speakers were:—Affirmative: Mr. Gedge, Cath. Hall; Mr. Bulwer, Trin. Hall; Mr. Helps, Trin. Coll.; Mr. Smith, Queens’ Coll. Negative: Mr. Tooke, Trin. Coll.; Mr. Ord, Trin. Coll.; Mr. Wilson, Trin. Coll.; Mr. Baylan, Trin. Coll.; Mr. Cockburn, Trin. Hall. Votes: For, 50; Against, 35. Majority, 15.

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In the following year my father's name again appears as a speaker on the affirmative side of the question debated (February 8, 1825): 'Whether it was desirable that the Spanish Colonies should throw off their yoke of allegiance to the mother country previous to the year 1800?' The subject was proposed by Praed, who was supported on the affirmative side of it by Messrs. Tooke, Ord, Baylan, Bulwer, and Haughton. On the negative side there was only one speaker, Mr. Vyvyan; but after listening to the speech of Mr. Baylan, he voted in the affirmative, and the question was carried *nem. con.*, in a House of 110. On March 1, 1825, Mr. Fitzgerald proposed the question: 'Is the political character of Burke deserving of our approbation?' The debate was opened by Mr. Ord, and my father spoke on the side of the majority, in approbation of the character of Burke. The last discussion in which his name appears upon the Minutes took place on April 19, 1825, when he proposed the following question: 'Is a reform in the present system of Game Laws desirable?' The debate was opened by himself, in favour of a reform of the Game Laws, and that view was affirmed by a majority of 57.

Some of the statements of accounts, and other business reports preserved by the society in its archives, are in the handwriting of my father, while he successively filled the offices of secretary and treasurer during the short period of his connection with it. Mr. Skipper mentions that when the Union was established its members were forbidden to discuss any event subsequent to the Reformation, and that their devices were manifold for discussing current political questions in the disguise of old ones. He relates a characteristic anecdote of the late Master of Trinity, Dr. Whewell, who, being President of the Union when it received from the Vice-Chancellor a message ordering the dispersion of one of its meetings, replied: 'Strangers will please to withdraw, and the House will take the message into consideration.' But the extracts I have quoted from the Minutes of the Society in 1824 and 1825

show that any restriction then placed on its debates was little more than nominal, and that the tone of its discussions was decidedly liberal.

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In his amusing explanation of the lines quoted by him from Praed's squib, Mr. Skipper says of one stanza, 'The question is Reform, and after the Opener has addressed the House, Lytton's rising is thus described:—

'Then the Church shakes her rattle, and sends forth to battle
The terror of Papist and Sinner,
Who loves to be seen as the modern Mæcenæus
And asks all the poets to dinner.'

But there is certainly nothing either in any record of my father's speeches at the Union, or in any youthful writings or notes of study referable to this period of his life, which throws a ray of light on the origin of this, apparently inappropriate, description of him as the undergraduate champion of the Church, or the denouncer of 'Papists and sinners.'

In his own reminiscences of college life he mentions the arrival at Cambridge of the present Regius Professor of Greek, Benjamin Hall Kennedy; whom he describes as 'an ardent, enthusiastic youth, a young giant in learning, who carried away the prize from Praed,' and who was one of the speakers at the Union when he himself was a member of it. To him (who of all my father's college contemporaries was by far the greatest scholar) I am indebted for a few further recollections of that brilliant little undergraduate world.

I entered (he writes) as a freshman in 1823, and took my Bachelor's degree in January 1827. As your father, the late Lord Lytton, whom we then called Bulwer, was one year my senior in standing, the years 1824 and 1825 are those during which we were intimate; for in 1826 he had ceased to reside in college. In those days, mathematical studies were the sole avenue to a degree in Arts. A Classical Tripos was constituted in 1824; but its examination was confined to those who had taken the B.A. degree in mathematical honours. Classical men might gain University Scholar-

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ships, or Composition prizes ; but, as these were not numerous, many good scholars passed through the University without distinction, for want of mathematical talent.

Many of my Cambridge contemporaries, however, who took no rank of honour in the examinations of that time, acquired in after life high distinction. This remark does not apply to Macaulay, for he gained a Craven Scholarship and a Trinity Fellowship. It does not apply to Cockburn, for he took a degree in Law, with a place in the First Class, and became Fellow of Trinity Hall. It applies to the world-renowned name of your father ; to the names of Alfred Tennyson, of William Makepeace Thackeray, of my illustrious schoolfellow, Charles Darwin, and to others who became more or less eminent in public or professional life, or as literary men : such as your kinsman Mr. C. R. Villiers, still M.P. for Wolverhampton ; Charles Buller ; Hutt (Sir William lately deceased) ; Mr. S. H. Walpole, our late excellent representative ; Monckton Milnes (Lord Houghton) ; Trench (Archbishop) ; John Stirling ; Frederick Maurice ; Derwent Coleridge ; Ord ; and perhaps a larger list. Of my large acquaintance thus described or indicated, I can recognise thirty-five as now surviving ; all, like myself, septuagenarians. A few probably may be added who have escaped my recollection.

The star of first magnitude in Cambridge undergraduate society, when I went to College, was Winthrop Mackworth Praed ; than whom I have known no man in my experience more generous and noble-minded. He came from Eton, where he had been a leading speaker in its Debating Club (Pop) and Editor of its famous Periodical 'The Etonian.' At Cambridge he was a great prize-winner, gaining four medals for Greek and Latin verse, and two for English poems, 'Australasia' and 'Athens.' He was also, with Macaulay and others, a writer of eminence in 'Knight's Quarterly Magazine ;' and in the Union Society he was certainly the leading debater ; at least, during my time, when it had lost Macaulay. I had no good opportunity of comparing the two men ; but I think it more than probable that Praed's ready wit and free sprightly manner would make him the more effective skirmisher in debate ; though in a set speech on a great subject Macaulay's massive and powerful eloquence, fed by large and accurate knowledge, placed him beyond the reach of any rival. I think I have heard your father say that Plunkett alone could be regarded as Macaulay's superior : on this ground, that while he expounded the general

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question with the highest eloquence, he could also grapple victoriously with the strongest arguments of preceding speakers on the opposite side. In my first term Praed sought my acquaintance with the utmost courtesy and kindness, through a common friend, Outram, an Etonian. After the Christmas vacation he proposed my name for election at the Union; and, by his introduction, the best and most intellectual society of Cambridge undergraduate life was at once opened to me. Among the rest, it was then that I became acquainted with your father.

I well remember seeing him for the first time at some wine party. I caught his eyes accidentally at a moment when they seemed to be scanning me; and I quite remember the almost electric feeling conveyed to me by the circumstance. I did not know who he was, but I thought I had never seen a face so strongly individual, or one wearing so probable a stamp of original genius.

After this, we must have met pretty often, both at the Union debates and in each other's rooms or the rooms of friends. I do not think I often walked out with Bulwer as I did with Stirling and other friends. He kept a horse or cob, and rode out usually for exercise: a luxury beyond my means. His College rooms in Trinity Hall were on the ground floor to the left after entering; and many a pleasant hour have I spent in them.¹ The Union debates were on Tuesday evenings from 7 to 10 P.M. Subjects were chosen a fortnight, I think, beforehand. Any member might enter a subject on a paper hung up for the purpose, with his own name as Opener. These were read out by the President in the half-hour of business, and a show of hands, or division, if required, was taken for the choice. It was the President's duty to close the debate in time to divide on the question discussed before ten o'clock if possible.

The Union Society met in a large room behind the Red Lion in Petty Cury, not being then provided with that handsome and convenient house which was built for it many years subsequently by the architectural skill and taste of Mr. Waterhouse. Your father was not, so far as I remember, a very frequent speaker in the debates of the Union; but when he did speak, he was always heard with lively interest, for he had studied his subject, and my

[¹ Since then they have been destroyed by fire, and the rooms which now occupy exactly the same position are of more recent date.—L.]

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impression was that, to some extent at least, he had prepared his speech. In his later life, as I have heard from an experienced Member of Parliament, when it was known that he would speak in a debate of the House of Commons, he always drew a full House to hear him.

Cockburn also spoke with great fluency, power, and precision, and I have no doubt he had well thought over and, in great measure, had prepared his language. He was very short-sighted, and I once or twice saw him, in the most retired part of the Trinity grounds, slowly pacing and moving his lips, as if reciting to himself, on a Tuesday morning. 'We shall have a good speech from him to-night,' I thought to myself; and so it came to pass. In fact, he was simply exercising and training himself for that warfare of words which carried him to legal, parliamentary, and judicial eminence.

Præd's style was different. He was always sufficiently at home in his subject-matter to escape any semblance of shallowness or incoherence, yet so pleasantly discursive, and often witty, that he did not seem to have prepared his thoughts or language, but to have found an occasion on the moment, and to have used it with instinctive readiness. He appeared to have the qualities and accomplishments of a good debater; yet, on entering the House of Commons, in 1830 and 1831, he did not at first command much attention.

In 1825, I had written and sent in, for the Chancellor's Medal, a poem on 'Sculpture,' an extract from which is printed on p. 243 of my little book called 'Between Whiles.' I well remember that your father, who had also written, called on me and asked if he might read my lines, and that I put them in his hands, saying that I had no expectation of the medal, and wished him success. He was the winner, and great pleasure it gave me that he would leave his name on the Prize-boards of the University; we little knew that within a few years it would be graven on the tablets of world-wide fame. I was in the Senate-house when he read his Prize-poem, having something of my own to read at the same time. What I next remember of him is that he sent me, soon afterwards, a volume of poetry, not, I think, published. It contained a piece called 'Almack's' in which some of the beauties and some of the wits of the day were commemorated in flattering or unflattering terms.

It was not till long after they had left College that my father and Canon Kennedy (though as members of the Athenæum Club they continued to meet occasionally) renewed their acquaintance with each other on a closer footing. But they had then added to their common recollections of College days so many mutual sympathies that the acquaintance thus renewed soon ripened into an enduring friendship.]

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CHAPTER IV.

*(Supplementary.)*NON-ACADEMICAL STUDIES. 1822. *Æt.* 19.BOOK
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[My father mentions in the opening chapter of this part of his Autobiography, that English history was the first subject studied by him 'in the earnest spirit of a scholar;' and he says that, during his first term at Cambridge, he filled common-place books with abridgments from all the authorities he was then able to consult, adding comments of his own upon them. These common-place books have been preserved. They merit a word or two of notice. Three bulky tomes are filled with 'notes and observations' on the history of England from the earliest British period down to the beginning of the reign of Henry VII.; and two, of slenderer size, are devoted to the history of Ireland down to the reign of King John. All five volumes are dated 1821, and must have been written between the ages of eighteen and nineteen. Considered in relation to their date, the notes and observations are altogether remarkable. They make but little reference to events which occupy the foreground of history. The main subject of them is the condition of the English people at each stage of its national development. The point of view thus adopted is copiously illustrated, with a range and variety of research wholly unindicated by my father's statement in his Autobiography, that, taking Rapin for the guidance of his main course, he diverged by the way into the study of contemporary authorities whenever they were accessible to him. The note-books are rich in extracts carefully copied from the

early chroniclers, French and English, from monkish records, and Scandinavian songs, from the literature of the several eras, from original documents, and from modern text-books on the laws and Constitution of England. They deal with the structure and aspect of English society at different periods, the influences which shaped its character, the laws which embodied its legal conceptions and regulated its social relations, the classes of which it was composed, and the literature which reflected its ideas. They abound in contemporary anecdotes relating to the manners and customs of the people, the houses they dwelt in, the food they ate, the industries they practised, the amusements in which they delighted. The sources and distribution both of national wealth and political power are examined with care; and the personal reflections upon suggestive facts or characteristic anecdotes are sometimes singularly shrewd and far-reaching. Special pains appear to have been bestowed upon the reigns of the Plantagenet kings; and in the abundance of the anecdotes and the vivacity of the observations about the social condition of England under Edward IV. may be found perhaps the first germs of those thoughts and studies which long afterwards shaped themselves into the historical romance of 'The Last of the Barons.'

A sixth common-place book, begun in 1821 (probably at Ramsgate) and finished at Cambridge early in 1823, is filled with notes of desultory and promiscuous reading. These books, however, are confined to a brief period of my father's student life, and only indicate the works containing matter he thought worth extracting. They are far from showing the whole range of his reading at that time; and to learn the full extent of the indiscriminate eagerness with which he devoured books of all kinds in his youth, we must refer to a letter he wrote in middle life to an intimate correspondent, in which he describes his 'forays into literature' both at school and college.

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Before the age of thirteen I was a very fair English scholar. I had read all the most popular of our authors, and my knowledge of English history and the progress of English literature was perhaps both copious and minute. One of my masters, observing in me this inclination to general reading, opened to me the stores of his private library. But, unluckily for me, he insisted on recommending the perusal of particular books and examining me in their contents. I remember that in this way he forced upon me Sully's 'Memoirs : ' a book in which I could not persuade myself to take the smallest interest. And, as I saw it was in vain to attempt to get from him other books till I had satisfied him of my knowledge of this one, his library soon became to me a sealed treasure. If boys are fond of reading, the less any particular books are forced upon them the better it will be for them. One of the classic authors tells us of a man who used to cut the wings of his bees and then set flowers before them. He was surprised that they made no honey from posies the most daintily selected, while the bees of his neighbour, flying about wherever they pleased, stocked their hives from weeds and wild thyme.

Certainly that detestable Sully was a great obstacle to me. But when I was at home for the holidays I read, as Montesquieu says he wrote, *à pas de géant*. I cast myself upon a circulating library as a sloth upon a tree. First, I began with the gay buds and tender leaves of poetry, novels, and the drama. But when these were all devoured, I attacked the harsher branches of history, criticism, and the *belles lettres*. When I once got upon one of these Trees of Knowledge I never stopped till I had devoured all. I think I entirely consumed three of the largest and most miscellaneous circulating libraries then accessible to me. And I purchased, out of my pocket-money, books of every description, whenever I had the opportunity of picking them up cheap. The only works excepted from my hungry forays into every province of literature that lay within my reach were voyages and travels. And this was not from dislike of them, but from a passion that I feared to cultivate. A romance, however adventurous or exciting, I felt to be a work of pure fiction ; and it contented me to *imagine* myself an actor in its scenes. But the real romance to be found in books of travel threw me into a fever. I burned to visit the lands described, and to participate in the adventures told. After reading one of these works (I think by a Captain Irwin) I actually resolved to run away. I even packed up secretly a bundle of clothes and left the house with it. But I

had not gone many yards before remorse at my ingratitude seized me, and I returned. From that time I eschewed the reading of travels and voyages : and to this day there is no part of miscellaneous literature which I more shun, or which, nevertheless, more attracts and enchants me.

At school I had become familiar with the poetry of my own time, and knew by heart the greater part of the poems of Byron, Scott, Moore, Campbell, and Southey. Of these, from the age of twelve till I went to college, Scott and Campbell were my favourites; and their rhymes were always humming in my ears. A fatal familiarity ! No man destined to be a writer should become early imbued with the works of the authors immediately preceding him—especially if they are of transcendent genius. Their influence overpowers his natural faculty just as it begins to struggle into self-assertion and original expression.¹ As I read with pleasure, so I studied with ease. But at all times I was no less fond of sport than of study : and, throughout my life, books have been to me either incentives to action, or stimulants to the pleasures, the interests, and the emotions, connected with personal experiences and relations, rather than that all-sufficient society or occupation which is found in them by the habitual student.

His temperament and his tastes (as truly described by himself) were certainly not those of the scholar or the bookworm. He threw himself with ardour into the pleasures of youth ; he relished even its frivolities. And, though the shyness of his nature unfitted him in many respects for the enjoyment of general society, no man ever more largely responded to the charm of congenial companionship.]

[¹ This reflection touches a fringe of that far-reaching truth to which the genius of Schiller has given one of the finest images in literature. 'The artist,' he says (meaning the poet or creative writer), 'is no doubt the son of his time. But ill is it for him, if he be also its pupil or its darling. A beneficent Divinity snatches the suckling in time from his mother's breast, nourishes him on the milk of a better age, and lets him ripen under distant Grecian heavens to his maturity. Then, when he has grown into manhood, he returns to his own century in the image of a stranger : not to please it by his presence, but, terrible as the son of Agamemnon, to purify it. The substance of his work he will take from the present, but the form of it from a nobler time, yea, from beyond all time, out of the essential, invariable individuality of his own being.'—Schiller, *On the Æsthetic Education of Mankind*. Ninth letter.—L.]

CHAPTER V.

*(Supplementary and Illustrative.)*LITERARY WORK AT CAMBRIDGE. 1820-23. *Æt.* 18-20.BOOK
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1821-25

[A SMALL volume of verse entitled 'Delmour, or a Tale of a Sylphid, and other Poems,' was written by my father at Cambridge, and published in 1823 by Messrs. Carpenter & Son. The dedication, dated Cambridge, April 19, 1823, was addressed to Lord Holland, who acknowledged it in a letter dated May 11 of that year:—'Your very obliging letter and valuable present reached me on Friday last, and I am really at a loss how to express my sense of the honour you have conferred on me by dedicating your work to me, and the still greater favour of conveying your motives for doing so in such flattering terms. Accept my best thanks, and allow me to hope that you will give me some opportunity of expressing them *viva voce* when you come to town.' This appears to be the first letter received by the author from Lord Holland; on whose subsequent letters, later in life, he endorsed the following remarks:—

Lord Holland does not quite deserve the eulogies of Macaulay. He was very accomplished and well read. But his mind was narrowed by intense partisanship in politics, and the contracted views in criticism and philosophy which belonged to the French Revolutionary school. In his good nature there was something indolent and frigid. Lady Holland had more energy and more warmth of nature. He would serve a friend if it did not put him out of his way. She would go out of her way to serve one. No English house

ever excelled theirs in social charm. But it owed more to Lady Holland than to him.

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This description of Lord Holland's character coincides in the main with what is said of it by one of the many eminent men of his own generation who were intimately acquainted with, and warmly attached to, him. Lord Brougham, in his memoirs, says that Lord Holland, like his illustrious uncle, Charles Fox, 'had the genuine Whig predilection for the kind of support given by the union of great families. . . . They both had, with the simplicity, the defects, of children; their feelings were strong, but not deep; the impression made on their hearts was soon effaced. I have often rallied Holland for regarding men with the eye of a naturalist, rather than of a brother, and interesting himself in observing their habits, rather than regarding them as their relation to us required.' Lord Brougham speaks elsewhere of the delight felt by all who approached Lord Holland, 'in the amiable disposition of his heart, and in a temper so perfectly sweet, so perseveringly mild, that nothing could ruffle it for an instant, nor any person, nor any passing event, make the least impression upon its even surface.'

My father's portrait of Lady Holland is very different from, and much less unpleasant than, the one drawn by Mrs. Butler. But the difference probably proceeds from his better knowledge of her real character.

It was during the latter part of his residence at Cambridge that he 'sketched the outline of the tale of "Falkland," and wrote the commencing chapter of "Pelham."' Two other compositions belonging to the previous part of his undergraduate time (one of them unfinished, and both unpublished) were undoubtedly his earliest attempts in narrative prose. The first of these manuscripts is a letter describing the experiences and sensations of a freshman at Cambridge. It seems intended for the beginning of a series, of which the sequel has been either lost or never written.

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THE MISERIES OF A FRESHMAN.

You wished me to write you a detail of my adventures here. Lo, I comply. The day after I arrived. . . . No, ~~that~~ is not methodical enough for the writer of an important and faithful history. I must begin *ab ovo*. The coach deposited me safely at the door of the 'Eagle and Child'—facetiously denominated the 'Bird and Baby.' Here there were two or three gowmsmen, loitering with an air of easy indolence, and eyeing the new passengers with a look half careless and half inquisitive. It was with some trepidation I dismounted the steps, and waited on the pavement for the delivery of my portmanteau. Nor could I resist an unpleasant sensation of awkwardness stealing over me, as I caught the glances of the sons of Alma Mater. This, however, I strove to get rid of, by looking round with a big air, and calling to the coachman to make haste, in an imperative tone. At length, all was settled; and I followed the waiter into a room on the ground floor. After I had ordered dinner, pulled up my collar at the glass, arranged my neckcloth, and harmonised the chaos of my hair, I sat down to write a note to our friend Mr. — (who, you know, is a Fellow of Trinity), informing him of my arrival, and requesting his company at dinner, or tea, as might suit him best. Having despatched this note, I felt rather easier: looked out of the window, envied the nonchalant mien of every gowmsman who passed, longed yet dreaded to go for a walk, looked again at myself in the glass, and sallied forth, murmuring the air of 'Who's afraid?' The appearance of the town was less displeasing than had been my first impression of it. The streets were certainly dirty and narrow; but this only seemed to heighten the venerable magnificence of the colleges; and the gothic grandeur of King's, and the more modern splendour of the Senate House, more than made up for all the imperfections of the town. Although the term had not yet commenced, Cambridge seemed pretty full; and I could not help admiring the business-like air and meditative mien which were unconsciously assumed by the collegians. This was afterwards explained by the information that the gowmsmen I had seen were principally of that description denominated 'Reading Men:' who either stay up out of term or are more early in their return. When I got back to my quarters, I found a note from Mr. — saying 'I might

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expect him to tea at seven. I pass over the time till then, for I scarcely remember how I got through it. But I do remember that I was feeling very lonely, anathematising Shenstone's eulogy on an inn, and repeating Byron's lines on solitude, when our friend entered. After an hour's chat (chiefly questions on my side and answers on his), we went out in search of lodgings. For I need scarcely tell you that Trinity is too full to admit any freshmen, I might almost say any undergraduate, to the advantages of rooms in College. Having seen several others, I at last fixed on some very tolerable lodgings near Trinity, for which I am to pay twenty-three shillings a week, and which I agreed to enter on the following day. Our next concern was with the tailor; by whom I was presently equipped with those ugly indispensables, a cap and gown. You remember how you used to laugh at me for my attention to dress—a habit which I think I defended with great ability. A few words from me, therefore, on the subject of the academic costume will not be out of character. If the whole wit and invention of man were employed to discover a dress which should deprive the human figure of

[There is here a gap in the MS.]

. and I then returned to the rooms of Mr. — ; where in sober converse we wore away the evening till I began to think of retiring to my own apartments, and recruiting my strength for the important morrow. But here have I scribbled through more than half my paper, and yet told you nothing. I must change my style, and adopt the Laconic. I spare you all description of my introduction to my college tutor. I spare you all the little formalities previous to my becoming a confirmed collegian; and I come to that awful moment when the voice of the clock proclaims a quarter after three, and dinner is on the table. There was a crowd collected on the steps leading into the Hall; and, as I walked up the immense quadrangle, I felt as if every eye was fixed upon me. You know how nervous my private education has made me. But when I found myself actually last in the throng of purple gowns which haunted the approach, and stunned by the clatter of dishes and babel of voices, I felt very much as a shoeblack might feel if transplanted to Almack's, or the Man in the Moon if dropped down, dog, bush, lanthorn, and all, in the centre of Bond Street. When the dishes were all placed on the table, there was a hungry and eager look, a murmur, and a

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sudden rush. I found myself borne down the current, till, following the example of my immediate precursor, I dropped into a place by an enormous sirloin of beef. This was abruptly seized, and a fork stuck into it. A pile then suddenly rose on the plate of my opposite neighbour. Scarcely had he relinquished the sirloin before it was pounced upon by another. The same operation took place. A third succeeded, and I began to cast a disconsolate glance at a hacked and maimed shoulder of mutton (I always hated mutton) which was rapidly approaching me, when I found the beef (*ehou, quantum mutatus ab illo Hectore!*) before me, and, so far as I could in my inexperience perceive, no rival fork at hand. I therefore brandished mine, and was just going to make up for lost time—when, like the *Fata Morgana*, it vanished in a trice. Looking round with a certain elongation of face, I beheld the fruit of my wishes and the abode of my hopes carried away with the utmost rapidity by one of the waiters to another end of the table. I was quite aghast at his audacity, but could not summon up resolution to call him back. So, after another forlorn survey, I took up with the mutilated mutton. This I found in that luxurious condition which may be called the temperate: neither hot nor cold; the gravy not quite grease, and the fat not quite as hard as a brickbat. You may be sure I did not commit any imprudent excess on so delicious a viand. But soon after, following the example of my neighbours, I resolved to *size*. This is a practice peculiar to our tables. You are supplied with various joints of meat and vegetables for commons. The customary superfluity of tart and pudding will, on application to the *Ganymedes* and *Hebes* of the Hall, be obtained, at a separate charge, from the cook. This is called *sizing*, and this, as I before said, I resolved to do. So, seizing a favourable opportunity, I requested the same fellow who had purloined my beef to procure me some apple tart. For I thought that so bold and dexterous a genius would do as well for me as for another. ‘Your name, sir?’ said my procurator; and I was forced to let all my companions into that mystery. This to me was a great bore: especially as all who heard it looked up at me. Fast flew the minutes. All around me were supplied. I alone remained with idle knife and fork. So, thinking I was in the land where all things are forgotten, I made the same demand of a little girl who tripped by me; and I was again forced to undergo the ordeal of delivering my name. A due time having elapsed without my sight being

blessed by the appearance of the desired acquisition, I ventured to apply to a third waiter, and gave him particular injunction to be expeditious. In the meanwhile I had sufficient time to inspect the physiognomies of my fellow-eaters and academicians. There was nothing peculiarly interesting to a Lavaterian in the survey—except one face, of which my impressions afterwards proved just. It was his whose poetry we have both of us so much admired, and who as a schoolboy gained such a reputation.¹ While I was studying his countenance, the man to whom I had addressed my first petition for some apple tart, appeared with the unhoped-for object. I had just commenced a hungry attack upon it, when, lo! the second handmaid also appeared, and deposited her load, more apple tart! and at the next moment my third messenger arrived, with still more apple tart. What a moment! All my neighbours in sheer astonishment simultaneously suspended the progress of the various mouthfuls which at that tremendous moment were half-way to their lips: all of them fixed their wondering eyes upon so inordinate an eater: and there was I, famished, blushing, stammering, and utterly at a loss what to do. Alas! apple tarts, like misfortunes, do not come singly.

So much for the comforts of College living. On quitting the Hall, I resolved to take a walk before returning to my solitary lodgings. As I went along, I could not but observe that I was, to use a vulgar phrase, ‘uncommonly stared at.’ Many turned round to look again: many, as I passed them, smiled with a peculiar expression. This I attributed to some ‘freshness’ about my walk, or look, or manner. There is a certain *nescio quid* very odious in the word Freshman; and this idea made me of course feel twice as awkward. I turned down a narrow lane, called Green Street (which was the first I came to), that I might escape this hateful scrutiny. Scarcely had I got three doors down it, when, looking on the left side of the street (I was on the right), I saw a house open, and two or three impudent baggages looking at me and laughing. How I wished them at the devil! Presently one, who, I suppose, thought her age and looks sufficient security, crossed over the way and thus accosted me—

‘Oh, sir, he! he! he!’

Judge my consternation.

‘Well, mistress?’

[¹ Presumably Præd.—L.]

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'He! he! he! Oh, sir, excuse me, sir, but it is so droll. He! he! he!'

Beginning to think it a premeditated affront, and setting down the Cambridge people as the most brazenfaced in the world, I turned on my heels in a rage, when another peal twice as loud-resounding, made me look round, and I heard—

'Pray, sir, don't be angry, but, . . . he! he! he! you have got . . . he! he! he! . . . your cap on the wrong way.'

Here let me drop the pen. Imagination shudders at the memory of that moment too much to allow me to dwell any longer on its misery. I must bid you farewell for the present. In my next, if I survive the effect of them, I will continue the chronicle of my embarrassments.

Yours truly.

P.S.—I open my letter to say that, as I was hurrying down the street to chapel, my sleeve was twitched by a Fellow, who, with a quizzical leer and a voice chuckling with delight, said, 'You are a Freshman I presume, sir?' 'Yes, I am. What then?' 'I thought so, sir, by the way you wear your gown.' I turned round. My gown, like my cap, was put on the only way in which it could be wrong. Oh, the impotent wrath of that moment! I adjusted my gown, feeling, and doubtless looking, inexpressibly silly. I tried to laugh it off, but my laugh sounded to me like the mocking echo of a laugh not mine. These adventures sickened me of walking. That night, when my tea things were laid, my sofa wheeled to the fire, and my favourite 'Gil Blas' open on my knee, I said to myself, 'Well, to-night at least I shall be comfortable.' Scarcely had I made that soothing reflection ere there came a gentle tap at my door, and a being entered, with a book under his arm. But, my dear —, the post will not wait for another word from me, so the being and the book must. Adieu!

The second prose manuscript is a slight fiction founded on the legend connected with the tree still shown in the garden of Christ's College, Cambridge, as Milton's tree. By this legend my father's fancy appears to have been long haunted; for he treated it in verse as well as prose. But the juvenile tale is of no biographical or other interest sufficient to claim a place

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for it in these illustrations of the literary products of its author's college days. I subjoin a facsimile from the original manuscript of the poem written at the same time on the same subject. This poem he afterwards published in 1831, incongruously coupling it with 'The Siamese Twins,' a burlesque which he has justly described as 'a very jejune and puerile' performance, and which he never republished. Of the poem on Milton he thought more highly. He retouched it again and again. His final version of it was published by Mr. Murray in 1865; and in a letter written a few years later to Mrs. Leo Schuster, he says, 'It has always been a favourite child of mine, though it is very little known even to the few who read my other poems.' His predilection for it is easily explained. The situation, and the feelings, described in the poem are distinct reflections from that supreme experience of his boyhood which never ceased to haunt him with the recollections of its brief romance.]

CHAPTER VI.

*(Supplementary.)*HISTORY OF THE BRITISH PUBLIC. 1824. *Æt.* 21.BOOK
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[My father's diversified intellectual efforts during his Cambridge time were in keeping with the practice of his after life. He had succeeded as a speaker at the Union; he had written poetry, and obtained the prize for his poem on sculpture; he had turned the Milton legend into a prose fiction, and had commenced two of the novels he afterwards completed and published; one of them, 'Pelham,' being the foundation of his fame. He did not stop here. His historical studies, and his disposition, from opening manhood, to revolve the graver problems of political and social life, found expression in a scheme for a 'History of the British Public.' The outline of the work was drawn up at Windermere in the summer vacation of 1824; and, as the only means of conveying an adequate idea of his speculations on such subjects at the age of twenty-one, I print here a portion of the manuscript in which he sketched the general scope of his design. The subject was of a high, ambitious order, and the proposed treatment of it original—the result of his own reflection, and not the reproduction of his reading in an altered form.]

HISTORY OF THE BRITISH PUBLIC.

(FRAGMENTS.)

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Plan of the Work.

DEFINITION.—Distinction between Public and People. It will follow that in different ages the Public is still a class, and only a class. At one time it is the Barons, at another the Clergy, at another the Middle Class; rarely the Populace.

1st Period: The Public to King John. 2nd Period: To King Richard II. 3rd Period: To Henry VII.

Portraits of Becket, Henry, Warwick, Clarence, and all the popular idols. Chivalry, Witchcraft, Lollards. Treatment of those who would enlighten the Public. The People corrects the errors of the Public; that is to say, one generation corrects another.

From Henry VII. to Charles I. Reformation. What did the Public do with regard to Authors, &c.? House of Commons rarely, if ever, represents People: pretty generally a fair representative of Public.

Public from Charles I. to George I. From George I. to middle of George IV.

View of Public since. Summary and results. Great reforms, whether for good or evil, always worked by Minorities. Theory of Reaction. Public estimate of Authors. Authors moderately popular in their time generally the most durable. Books that enchant the public, and theories that enchant the Public, have seldom kept their ground. The highest degree of Art must wait long before the Public can understand it. Fault of popular Parties, to go with the Public, and not penetrate the People. Astonishing fact that, after a thousand years since the Conquest, no education for People, no law for People.

Review of the principal Histories of England. Authors not of most general popularity in their time: Roger Bacon, Chaucer, Qu. Shakespeare, Milton, Jeremy Taylor, Burke in House of Commons. Authors of highest popularity: Skelton, De Foe, Bunyan, Swift.

BOOK I.—SECTION 1ST.

It is a mistake, common alike to those who legislate for the present and those who narrate the past, to confound the Public with the People. It will be new, and it may be useful, to illustrate

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the distinction between these two bodies; and it is my intention, in the following pages, to trace the history of the English Public throughout the various periods of our monarchy, from the Norman Conquest to the accession of William IV. From time to time I shall pause in this task, however, to contrast the steady silent progress of the People with the fickle changes and noisy follies of its unworthy representative, the Public.

The distinction I would establish between them will be best understood by the illustration of it from particular instances.¹

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All internal revolutions—that is to say, revolutions not produced by conquest or foreign interference—arise from one or other of the following sources: 1st, the People; 2nd, the Aristocracy; 3rd, Faction. The last is generally induced by the energy of particular individuals; and may therefore be said to have its origin rather in those individuals themselves than in the factions they form or govern. To revolutions of this third class the People is generally indifferent. In the majority of instances they have been initiated by the Capital, not by the Country. In countries where subsistence depends largely on the wisdom, and may be seriously diminished by the errors, of Government, the People is roused by famine into action for forcible change in the political system. Hunger, the mother of all energy, has taught men to be free. Fortunately for England and France, the soil of these countries does not produce a superfluity of provision for the sustenance of their population. Hence the errors of a bad Government are soon felt in a deficiency of food. An unjust tax produces discontent. Want provokes insurrection, and famine culminates in revolution. For a people will always rebel rather than starve. Unfortunately for the liberties of Italy and Spain, their soil produces so much subsistence in proportion to the small number and abstemious habits of its consumers that the population of these countries is rarely *compelled* to revolution. For even under the worst Governments want is almost the only evil consciously suffered by the People. It is an old and true observation that even in Turkey the despotic power which often strikes down the Pasha seldom interferes with the Peasant. Philosophers, in devising schemes for the moral improvement of the

[¹ The remainder of this chapter has been destroyed.—L.]

People's character, do not sufficiently consider the material amelioration of its condition.

Now, whenever revolution is the work, not of the People, or the Aristocracy, but of a Faction, the permanence of its result is extremely uncertain. And when I speak of the Revolutions of Faction, I do not mean those which have originated in a faction (for that has been the case with most revolutions), but those which rest upon faction, and are only supported by it. Their only probable or calculable chance of perpetuation lies in the influence or talents of the persons composing the Party which has brought them about.

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That liberty of opinion which has divided the English Community into various religious sects has created its own conservative limits. The concomitant existence of an Established Church, which maintains a certain standard of educated intelligence, has served to preserve Dissent, upon the whole, from running riot into fanatical excesses. It curbs that inflammatory action on the imagination which results from the emulous desire for converts; it stimulates, and to some extent necessitates, a competent learning in Dissenting Ministers, and prevents that jealous war which theological sects would be apt to wage with each other, if mutual tolerance and concord were less practically impressed upon the common sense of their common interests by the presence of a powerful Church Establishment.

So far, therefore, the Establishment and the Dissent Act work reciprocally to the benefit of the Common State.

On the other hand, no doubt, there are to be found in Dissent principles antagonistic to the more perceptible objects of Conservatism in England. The nature of this antagonism can be more conveniently examined hereafter. At present it suffices to admit that the influences of Dissent have been favourable to the conservatism of religious faith in populous towns, to a lively respect for the fundamental tenets of Christian ethics, and to that standard of practical common sense in political matters which seems to be always abandoned by modern societies when the checks of Christianity are removed from them. In fine, Dissent promotes, on the one hand, the general spread of Democracy; but, on the other hand, it discourages the more dangerous speculations with which, in

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Continental communities, Democracy has connected its social aspirations. Democracy may or may not be a bad form of government, but it is not necessarily subversive of religion, of property, or of the recognised conditions of existing civilisation. Socialism, Communism, Owenism, Fourierism, and all the other social sects which have branched out of a common root of Infidelity, would certainly annihilate the foundations of existing States, whatever else they might eventually reconstruct upon the ruins of them. Dissent in England counteracts this tendency.

Thus, independently of schools, Education in this country proceeds from the influences of home, the example and the habits of those amongst whom the generations are born. And these causes combine to give to the general national character an idiosyncrasy favourable to industry, to fortitude, to domestic affection, to respect for established laws, and to reverence for the hereditary religion. As the child grows up, and enters upon life, life itself becomes the Voluntary Teacher. Everywhere in the midst of vices, some of them inseparable from civilisation, and some incidental to humanity, he perceives at least a common respect paid to integrity and honour. The prodigious vital energy of the Commonwealth compels him to action of some sort. Intense competition nerves his faculties and keeps them on the stretch. The practical results to which, in commercial communities, invention and thought are commonly directed, and the contagious principle of self-government which prevails throughout the People in all its ramifications, from the national legislature to a parochial vestry—all these create out of the freedom of public opinion a certain harmony of common sense. Hence, that tendency to the practical, which Goethe justly regards as the permanent characteristic of the English, and the main secret of their ascendancy amongst the various races of the earth. It is not truly said of us that we are disinclined to theorise. If it were so, we should be inimical to progress; for every step in progress starts from a theory. But this is true of us: that no People has ever been more happy in its selection of theories; no people has theorised so little in vain.

., We have, indeed, been subjected, early in the manifestation of our national character, to the reproach of being fond of novelties. And it is perfectly true. But novelties, with us, are soon tested. If they lead to nothing valuable they fall into disuse and contempt. Utility, like the truth, of which it is a part, always prevails. If we are less inclined than the French to political Utopias, and than the Germans

to metaphysical problems, still the most valuable political axioms have come from us. From us every sound thinker desirous of founding a free State (whether the form of it be monarchical or republican) borrows the groundwork of his plan. With us the ideas which retain the most enduring sway over the widest range of intelligence have either originated or borne their most substantial fruit. Nay, if no Kants, or Schellings, or Hegels, agitate the intellect of our Universities, still the leading conceptions and most valuable propositions, even of these philosophers, are perhaps less generally taken up into the actual life and working intelligence of the ordinary German Public than into those of large numbers of Englishmen who, in all probability, have never surmised the existence of their systems, or heard of their names. Through their influence upon the minds and works of the few English writers who have taken them into their own theories or sentiments about human destinies and relations, these ideas work indirectly over a wider field of social activity : and I have heard an English mechanic talk pure Kantian philosophy without the least suspicion of the sources whence it had flowed into his mind.

Every English thinker or statesman who is capable of looking forward a little into the continuous operation of organic forces which in every free community, more or less, and in our own at least very perceptibly, are engaged in the displacement of the centre of political power, must earnestly desire the greatest possible increase of activity to this infiltration of knowledge and the results of educated thought throughout the body of the People. And for the acceleration of this process there are only two really efficient agencies. These we should spare no effort to promote. One is the cheapened publication of valuable books ; the other is the establishment of popular Literary Institutes. In a word, we shall never educate the children till we have educated the parents. The sentiment with which education is habitually regarded by the latter will practically determine the quality and the amount of it provided for the former. When the parents of the People have learned from their own experience to appreciate the value of Education they will no longer be satisfied with any government or political system which provides no adequate education for the children of the People.

The intelligence which may be collected and directed by means of such popular Institutes as I shall presently describe will infallibly radiate over a very wide circle ; reaching far beyond the lowest verge of the Trading Class, and well into the higher divisions of the

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Working Class. Indeed, the English Mechanic often exhibits a greater extent of general information, and combines with it a more habitual exercise of reflection, than the average type of opulent tradesmen. It is a mistake to judge of the intelligence of the Operative Class by the errors into which it is occasionally led by incorrect views of self-interest. A man in the highest class of general scholarship may have false notions of political economy; and education does not always suffice to correct the impulses of passion; least of all, the impulses of that passion which emanates from the organ of acquisition, and inflames the sense of loss or the desire of gain.

The most important of those questions which first present themselves under the head of Social Improvement are, at the present moment, the state of education in England, and of employment in Ireland.

Before touching any others, let us dwell a little upon these.

Care for education consists, 1st, in providing for it; 2ndly, in the encouragement of all distinctions which education produces. In vain to dwell on the advantages of literature, the delights of art; in vain to open schools and galleries, if the community still sees its men of letters starving and its artists slighted. It is not irrelevant, therefore, to examine, in the first instance, the encouragement given to art and letters by the character and habitual conduct of the Public; as, also, by the attitude of the State, which reflects the character of the Public, being formed in the image of it.

Review Pension List for Literature and Science.

Social respect for artists and men of letters.

Condition of the Drama.¹

Remedies: Increase Pension List. Order of Merit. Gallery for living artists; not dead only. For Drama: bring all theatres under one control, and pay rent of one great national theatre.

Two kinds of knowledge required for operatives: intellectual

[¹ These notes show that at the age of twenty-one my father was already interested in the state of the drama and popular literature; that he had turned his attention to various plans for their improvement, and that he had conceived, while still a boy, the outlines of ideas afterwards embodied in his parliamentary speeches and measures on 'The Monopoly of the two great Theatres,' 'Dramatic Copyright,' and 'The Taxes on Knowledge.'—L.].

knowledge, and industrial knowledge. Add to last industrial establishments in every district, comprising schools for females.

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Having thus provided for the industrial progress of the People, you must open to them as much as possible the markets of their industry. Poor laws. Abolish law of settlement. Remove unequal burdens on land. *All* property should be taxed for the poor. All facilities given to landlords for improvement of estates. Not loans only, but compensation for railways; promoting improvement as well as purchase of land. Specially important to develop railways.

Turn now to Ireland. *Résumé* of its real evils: Don't ask too much from landlords. It is impossible from their means. Provide employment that brings profitable return, to wealth of country. Purchase lands for Government, or encourage companies for that purpose on a large scale, and in every district. Introduce all improvements that can increase demand for labour. Lay the foundation of orchards in the rich valleys—each small owner, some fruit trees. Spread the cultivation of flax. Introduce hops. Try the mulberry and silkworm. Trust, in all these, the irresistible effect of example. Industrial schools everywhere. Put political questions at rest for a while. Let the Church sleep. Say boldly, 'Whatever our opinions on these matters, we must first give bread to the People. We must lay the foundation of those industries and habits on which national happiness depends.' In proportion as Ireland thus advances in industrial prosperity, the difficulty of adjusting religious differences will be diminished. In proportion as you increase the wealth of Ireland, you will be able to do that which is the only means of meeting the difficulty without straining the conscience of England. You can tax the Irish People for the maintenance of their own ecclesiastical establishments. Be firm in putting down crime. Go back to analogous states of society. Divide into districts. Make each district responsible for the crimes committed in it.¹

[¹ Perhaps some readers may find in these suggestions of a youth of twenty-one more indication of political wisdom than is yet generally perceptible in the latest experiments of septuagenarian statesmanship upon the government of Ireland.—L.]

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Upon the many hitherto unpublished writings, or fragments of writing, by my father which will occupy no small portion of the present work, it is not my intention to say more than may be necessary to place them before the public in their right relation to his feelings and circumstances at the time when they were written. I therefore abstain from lengthened comment on the character of this paper ; but I would, at least, invite attention to the closeness with which the course of popular education during the last half-century has followed the direction indicated, adopting the methods suggested, and exhibiting the results predicted, in it. The support given by the working classes to Mr. Forster's Education Act has fully justified the anticipation that 'when the parents of the people have learned from their own experience to appreciate the value of education, they will no longer be satisfied with any government or political system which provides no adequate education for the children of the people.' And beyond all question the two agencies which, during the last fifty or sixty years, have done most to educate 'the parents of the people,' are 'popular literary institutes' and 'the cheap publication of valuable books.' In the year when these observations were written Sir Edward Baines was founding the Mechanics' Institute of Leeds. The country is now covered with similar institutions ; and it is fortunate for its people that the enterprise of cheap publications fell, at the outset, into the hands of men animated by a genuine affection for the masses, and a strong belief in their capacity to appreciate the benefits of knowledge. Circumstances denied to Henry Brougham a political reputation commensurate with the activity of his intellect and the force of his eloquence ; but it is the lasting and fruitful achievement of that remarkable man to have breathed a popular spirit into what might otherwise have remained a doctrinaire theory, and given to the praiseworthy labours of Birkbeck and other educational philanthropists a vitality of success such as genius only can bestow. • Wider

still, if less conspicuous, has been the good effected by Chambers of Edinburgh, and Charles Knight. Their example has since been followed by many of the leading publishers, with the assistance of some of the leading writers, of Great Britain. But if all that has been done, in the present and previous generations, for the improvement of the masses by political demagogues could be collected and weighed, it would be as dust in the balance to the substantial benefit conferred upon the English people by the comprehensive enterprise of those two men.]

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BOOK IV.

WANDERJAH R

1824—1825

CHAPTER I.

(Autobiographical.)

THE GRAVE OF A DREAM. 1824. Æt. 21.

At the commencement of a long summer vacation, I accompanied one of the friends my share in the Union debates had procured me, on a visit to his parents in Northumberland. Poor William Ord! I see him now—his small stature, his dark, intelligent eyes. He was an instance of a mind cultivated beyond its powers; of ambition disproportional to the usual faculties that advance it—except application and hope.

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His parents moved in the best Whig society, and my young friend, from his childhood, had been brought up among wits and statesmen. He had already that tone of conversation which characterised the literary coteries of the day, at Holland House and Lydia White's. That mixture of the worldly and the intellectual; anecdote and *persiflage*; scorning political economy and statistics; a would-be freedom from prejudice; but such a contempt for the understanding and the honesty of those entertaining opposite opinions!

I spent a fortnight at his father's house, and thence I went to Penrith, and proceeded to travel on foot over the scenery of the English Lakes. Leaving my portmanteau, to follow me when settled where the whim might seize me, with my knapsack on my shoulders, I took my way along the shores of Ulleswater.

I had one object in this tour, far beyond any thought of pleasure and adventure. There was a spot amidst these dis-

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tricts which I had long yearned to visit, with such devout and holy passion as may draw the Arab to the tomb of the Prophet : a spot in which that wild and sorrowful romance of my boyhood, which had so influenced my youth, lay buried for evermore. And until I had knelt alone, and at night, beneath the stars at that shrine, I felt that my life could never be exorcised from the ghost that haunted it—that my heart could never again admit the love of woman, nor my mind calmly participate in the active objects of men. I performed that pilgrimage. What I suffered, in one long, solitary, night, I will not say. At dawn I turned from the place, as if rebaptised or reborn. I recovered the healthful tone of my mind ; and the stage of experience and feeling through which my young life had passed contributed largely to render me whatever I have since become.

CHAPTER II.

(Supplementary and Illustrative.)

THE TALE OF A DREAMER. 1824. Æt. 21. •

['THE Tale of a Dreamer' (dated in the first printed copy of it 'Windermere, 1824') is the poetical record of that night, to which my father briefly refers in his Autobiography—of the sufferings, the memories revived by it, and the hopes and resolutions they awakened. It is here alone that we have the continuation and completion of the pathetic story of baffled love which no one who has been touched by it would wish left imperfect, or think any summary a substitute for the authentic language of its author. To the young, poetry (even when unconsciously imitative) is the spontaneous language of emotion; and this 'Tale of a Dreamer,' notwithstanding the Byronic influence that pervades it, has in it, perhaps, more true poetic feeling than most of my father's later and less passionate utterances in verse.

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THE TALE OF A DREAMER.

(Written in 1824. An. æt. 21.)

My childhood scarce had glided into youth
 When my soul felt its secret depths, and drew
 The forms of fancy into life and truth.
 The thousand dreams of beauty that would bless
 My musing moments felt the spell, and grew
 Into one mortal mould of loveliness,

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Whose influence in my fervid spirit became
A deep pervading energy like flame,
Filling the earth beneath, the heaven above,
With a diviner life. That life was love.

And thou wert beautiful, my Viola !
The hues of morning slept upon thy cheek ;
The morning, ere man's step hath dash'd away
One dewdrop from the virgin flowers of earth.
Youth, health, and innocence had made thee gay ;
And the heart's smile, and happy laugh, would break
Forth from the springtide of thy maiden mirth.
We met, we saw, we loved, and we were blest.
We loved ! Ye heavens, within whose glories move
(Kindling the east and curtaining the west)
The everlasting ministers of love,
When have ye witness'd more voluptuous hours,
Diviner days more perfectly possess'd,
Or bliss more innocently bold than ours ?
Ah, brief, sweet, daybreak of the heart, when youth
Is fragrant still with childhood's freshest dew,
When every fair illusion is a truth,
And every charm, save innocence, is new !
And thou, sweet Love, round thy discoverers wreathing
The branches perfumed by thine odorous sigh,
And o'er the bright earth still more brightly breathing
The cloudless warmth of thine Italian sky,
Tho' thou art gone, and gone with thee the hues
Of life's young rapture, lost in long regret,
I will not, with the heartless herd, accuse
The power that blest, betray'd, and lures me yet.

A mist comes o'er the beauty of the past,
And I recall the day when bliss was torn
From this wrung heart with Viola. Aghast,
Baffled, and bleeding, I beheld her borne
Away, I knew not whither. Lonely there
The stream still roll'd beside me, murmuring,
And on my brow still breath'd the air of spring ;
But my dim sense was blinded by despair.

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And I saw nought before me. Like a pall
 Life's darkness cover'd me; my world's one light
 Was suddenly gone out for ever, and all
 The tracts of time were stricken into night.
 Months pass'd away, and brought no word of thee.
 I drifted down the darken'd days, as they
 Who in the fable sail upon the sea
 For ever and for ever. A lone way
 Without a change, a dread monotony,
 A dreaming slumber in a living grave,
 A sunless sky, a sea without a wave !
 If I had lost thee *now*, I should have sought
 O'er the wide world, and found thee : thou hadst been
 Free, and mine own once more. But I was then
 A boy, whose spirit felt, and loved, and thought,
 And would have *dared*, but might not *act*, as man.

* * * *

What do the wise with knowledge, that false tool
 Which forges misery for its master ? Why
 To store it nightly toils the labouring fool ?
 What profits the wan cheek and sunken eye
 Worn out with learning, in a barren school,
 To know life's folly, and, this known, to die ?
 In my young days, when thou and love were near,
 Perchance I was ambitious. That is past.
 There's nought in fame, or honours, to endear
 The solitude that Love hath made at last
 Of his own paradise. The night is drear,
 The fount is frozen, and the bower a waste
 Where no bird sings. What needs the mourner here
 Of lights that gild, but cannot break, the gloom
 Where in himself he hides his own heart's tomb ?

* * * *

Day darkens from the earth, and tenderly
 Steals the sweet eve into the silent sky.
 ' Cheer thee, my Viola ! One effort more,
 We reach yon wood, and then the danger's o'er.
 Our horses wait beside that hoary tree,
 And if—— Ah ! death alone can set us free !
 Vain, vain the conflict, vainer still the flight
 But hate may slay, it cannot disunite.

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Flash'd the fell tube, and rung the bickering blade,
Well sped the bravoës at their holy trade.
One wound—another—the short strife was o'er :
Earth swam around me, and I knew no more.

Not even death ! Yet felt I in my soul
What the grave's inmates feel perchance—a dense
Convulsive slumber of the shuddering sense ;
Slumber that slept not, but pursued its prey
With ravening horrors ; shapes of dread and dole
That sigh'd, and snatch'd, and gaped, and waned away ;
And many a ghastly sound and terrible cry
(Which none methinks have heard upon the earth)
Rocking abysses of silence, rose and fell :
Now the wild laughter of unholy mirth,
And now the shriek of some vast agony
That welter'd drowning in the nethermost hell.

Alas ! too soon upon that hideous night
Arose returning reason's wretched light.
Oh, how I long'd, as caged birds for their nest,
For that calm home beneath the grassy sod
Where woe at length hath wept itself to rest,
And, if we dream, our visions are of God.
I woke to sense,—and anguish : woke to feel
The winter of a heart without a flower ;
The wound time deepens while it strives to heal ;
The dull weight of the slow down-dragging hour ;
The overwhelming sense of loneliness
Which, in the wilderness, is said to rush
Over the soul till, in its fearful mood,
It maddens for a step, a look, a tone,
Even tho' it be a foeman's, to intrude
On that unearthly silence—and finds none !
But shrinks and shudders as it dares, alone,
The vast solemnity of solitude
Where its pent awe and gathering terror gush
Into a shriek which manhood vainly smothers,
A shriek without an echo. How methinks
My coward spirit from that memory shrinks !
I waked, I breathed, and knew—*she was another's.*

I did not blame thee, Viola, although
For me no joy was left beneath the sun.
I did not blame thee, for I knew, and know,
What arts thy life and mine have thus undone.
Thy sire hath yet between his soul and me
A dread account to render. Lo, I stand
Here, in the halls of midnight, girt with powers
Of dreadful birth, that my familiars be :
The spirits of the dark and stormy hours
My grief hath fought and conquer'd. I command
These ministers of my revenge to hear
The curse to them confided. Let him live
To long for dissolution, and to crave
A never-granted quittance. Let him give
An hourly promise to the gaping grave,
Yet still crawl on, the crippled fugitive
From a fear'd life, to find a deadlier fear
In that which follows life. Before his eye
Stand thou, and haunt him in the hour most drear
With the most ghastly terrors of the tomb,
Thou his own daughter, and around him wave
The fires that devastate but not consume.
Be every sin that he hath sown in me
Fruitful of some fresh torment to his soul.
So let him, unforsaken, unforgiven,
Be dogg'd by his own doing to the goal
Where Hell is hottest with the fear of Heaven !

Ah, wretch ! and wretchedest of all in this
Unhallow'd wish, which was not even mine,
But some delirious cry from that abyss
Where there is nothing human ! You divine
And griefless guardians of the realms above,
If your mysterious happiness she shares,
The sinless victim of my sinful love,
Let her not hear my voice save in the prayers
Her memory hallows. What have I, unblest,
To do with curses ? This was blindly wrung
From the fierce madness of a tortured breast.
But that which vents its vengeance on the tongue
Is far less vengeful than the vow suppress ;

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And so be this all vacant as the air
Where it dissolves, a soon-recanted prayer !

' My way of life is past into the sere
And yellow leaf '—nor care I now to know
Where it may lead me. For it is not year
Stealing on year, but woe succeeding woe,
And griefs, the ghosts of joys untimely slain,
That wither youth. The summers come and go,
The blossoms flower, and fade, and flower again,
▪ But never more the springtime of the heart
Once gone returns. Ay, even the very pain
▪ Of bliss departed shall itself depart,
And loss forgotten be life's only gain.

* * * *

I mix'd among the thoughtless and the gay,
A wither'd branch 'mid summer's glossy boughs,
A moth left wingless in the month of May.
But, when from nights of revel uprose the sun,
Softly rebuking the prolong'd carouse
Of hearts as light and joyous as the day
That o'er them dawn'd, in the dark heart of *one*
Still dwelt a grief that sought by bitter jest
And barren laugh, and simulated tone,
To keep its nameless misery all unguess'd.
Alas, how seldom are these worlds akin,
The world without us and the world within !

One night, amid the wonted festival
By Pleasure held in her illumined hall,
Last of her votaries there, my step and glance
Had not been all the duldest in the dance ;
And wan the lamps above the lingerers burn'd,
Ere from the ebbing revel I return'd.
As forth I pass'd, the dawn breath'd on me, sweet
And silent ; and the solitary street
Was silent too ; but, while the east grew red,
The dim vast city that around me spread
Rustled ; and its stirr'd silence seem'd to swell
With thrills, and spasms, and pulses audible ;

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Where the vex'd heart of it wax'd coghisant
 Of man's returning masters, Work and Want.
 Far off, where Morning from her orient brows
 Was scattering pearls among the hawthorn boughs,
 Back to their furrows troop'd the sons of toil
 Who sow, not reap, the sternness of the soil;
 Wringing vile food for wretchedness from earth
 Yet boasting of the charter of their birth.
 But far more wretched in their squalid cells
 Their brethren of the city sleep, or hush
 Their children's moans for bread, where misery dwells
 In sight of splendour. What dark instincts rush
 Into their spirits, when they wake to hear
 That bitter murmur bickering at their ear,
 Or dying in disease! Poor serfs to hell's
 Most tyrannous tempter, Want, 'tis yours to weep
 The day of toil without its night of sleep,
 The strong temptation, and the weaken'd will,
 The soul's sick struggle with the thoughts of ill,
 The breadless board, the fireless hearth, the wail
 Of woes that from the gibbet or the jail
 Shall win at last a silenced wretchedness.
 Oh, for one brief day of a seraph's power,
 Though death stood, at its evening, in the dress
 Of his most horrible torment,—could I shower
 Plenty on want, and solace on distress,
 I would embrace the torturer's rack, and while
 Its pangs were sternest, think of joy and smile!

I reach'd my home. I stood beside my bed
 But had no thoughts of slumber. There I found
 That fatal letter. And how listlessly
 I broke the seal, how motionless I read
 The words that told me where beneath the ground
 What *was* my life lay buried. *She was dead.*
 Dead. And I knew it, and I did not die.
 Not die, if this be life. My hand laid bare
 And falter'd not (without a groan, a cry,
 I read, as though in some wild dream it were)
 The page that letter folded. Yet mine eye
 Well knew the characters that, faintly fair

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And weaker than their wont in days gone by,
The hand that now was dust had written there :

' It is permitted in this hour, when death
Wins thy dear image from my parting breath
And human ties are severing, that the last
Of thoughts long chid should dwell upon the past,
And, ere my soul from life and love be free,
Return once more on wearied wings to thee.
Through solitudes of suffering I have trod,
Seeking in sorrow none but Sorrow's God ;
Shrinking from thoughts of thee and happier times,
Thoughts turn'd by law from blessings into crimes.
But now the struggle ends. For three long years
My soul was a seal'd fount of frozen tears,
And the first hope this aching heart hath known
Was when they whisper'd " Life's last hope is flown."
Wilt thou behold my grave ? Tears wept by thee
Its only truthful epitaph would be.
And yet if sad, not thankless, be the sigh
That mourns her death who but desired to die.
Death weighs me down. Ah, death but deepens more
The love still beating in my bosom's core ;
And, as the past comes o'er me, from my sight
Fades this sick chamber,—balmy breathes the night,
The sweet green fields, the starlit stream, are near,
Where first we met, and thy dear voice I hear.
In vain ! my weak hand fails. In vain I dwell
And linger o'er the lines that bid farewell.
But one word more—my weakness fails my will—
Bless thee, mine own love ! Bless . . . my heart is still.'

And *mine*, what was it ? One surpassing sense
Of infinite desolation, far too deep
For mitigating tears, and too immense
For bitterness. A pain that could not weep
Or pray, or minister to its own need
Of tears and prayers, by any word or deed.

* * * *

I stood beside her grave. The night was still
And sweet and starry. Not a single cloud
Dimm'd the exuberant moon. The little rill
Revell'd and babbled to himself aloud.

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Wild weeds and lowly shrubs were cluster'd there ;
 And underneath a happy sisterhood
 Of little purple flowers had found a fair
 And quiet cloister. The embowering wood
 Was full of whispers. In the moonlit air
 Serenely shone the gray church spire hard by,
 Pointing the way for simple faith and prayer
 From graves and griefs below, to joys on high.
 Around me life's fresh loveliness lay spread :
 My thoughts, my steps, my tears, were on the dead.

Oh, that the lore of legendary lay,
 The marvels of a mortal's might, were true !
 Oh, that the voice of magic could recall
 The vanished spirit to the mouldering clay
 That once was life, or for one hour renew
 The ruin'd past, and lift the sable pall
 Hiding death's hoarded secrets, so to steal
 One happy moment from them ! Viola,
 Come with the charnel weeds around thee waving,
 Come in the wanness of thy blighted bloom,
 And I will bless the gift my soul is craving,
 Nor chide the churlish usage of the tomb !
 I only ask to see thee. Dost thou hear ?
 For I am weary with long want, and grown
 Gray at the core from grief's monotony,
 Dead to all hope, and callous to all fear,
 And I would fain behold thee once, and die.
 I only ask to see thee. Art thou near ?
 Or is the vague and voiceless air alone
 The unheedful witness of a mourner's raving ?

* * * *

Enough ! my soul shall sink not. Well I know
 How bootless seems all sorrow for the dead.
 And if I err not wholly,—if the woe
 And thought, which are more deadly to our life
 Than years or sickness, do not falsely speak
 In the worn spirit and the faded cheek,
 Pall'd by thy joys, and weary of thy strife,
 O Earth, full soon within thy silent breast
 Thy son shall hush remembrance into rest.

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There was a simple stone upon the mould
 Where all my hopes were buried. It but told
 The day of first and second birth, and took
 One text of comfort from the Holy Book.
 Ah, grateful was the promise! 'Come, oppress
 And heavy-laden: I will give you rest.'
 And there she lay, the beautiful, the young,
 The broken-hearted victim of her vows;
 And wild and weeping the cypress hung
 Over her grave its monumental boughs,
 And the poor slumber'd round her: they whose ways,
 Obscure and rough, to reach that common rest,
 Her little life's brief, soon-extinguish'd, days
 Had brighten'd as they pass'd. The place was blest.
 A holy quiet hover'd in the air
 As though her gentle spirit linger'd there.
 And as I turn'd, reluctant, to depart,
 Its influence stirr'd that frozen deep, my heart.
 'The sweet and bitter thoughts' which long had slept
 Woke, and I fell upon her grave,—and wept.

Soul of the pure made perfect! Even above
 Still lived the memory of thine earthly love;
 Kind Heaven vouchsafed to thee, what earth denied,
 The power to comfort, though thou could'st not guide.
 I wept; and, melting through the frosts of years,
 Life's human hopes return'd to me in tears.

* * * *

My tale is done. Amid the world alone
 I stand, the martyr of my memory.
 But, though the spirits, around me there, are not
 Wild, free, and fierce perchance, as is mine own,
 And though still oft I yearn for wings to fly
 Far from my kind, to some sequester'd spot,
 Even as the wild bird, wounded, seeks his high
 Lone tarn where other wanderers linger not,
 Yet mine no more such solitary joy.
 Grief hath not sear'd my soul to selfishness.
 The wise alone can shine, the great destroy,
 But even the meanest have the power to bless.

O thou, my soul hath worshipt from my birth
 In the pure mountain air, and morning beam,
 Thou only goddess lingering still on earth
 Of all that blest the Grecian's golden dream,
 Eternal Freedom ! in this far retreat
 Where the unbounded heaven looks down to see
 The cityless soil uncurs'd by servile feet,
 A spirit drunk with thy divinity.
 Lone amid night and silence, calls thee ! Thou
 Throned on the rocks and waters, hear its vow !
 Though rude my harp, for thee its chords shall quiver :
 Though weak my voice, thy word it shall deliver :
 Though cold to love, for thee my heart shall burn
 With fires not quench'd, but purified, by sorrow.
 And so from days that are no more I turn,
 And to thine altars dedicate Tomorrow.

The brightest earthly hopes the author of the poem had ever formed for himself were shattered : he now resolved that he would labour to be a blessing to others. Strong in this resolution, he turned away tranquil from the grave of his Ealing heroine. He had conceived an object that would anew give purpose to an almost aimless existence, and his spirits revived at the prospect of devoting his energies to the interests of mankind. To battle for 'freedom' was the idea natural to his youthful prime. The special ends he set before him necessarily varied as his mind matured ; nor is it to be supposed that conflicting currents did not sometimes divert him from his main course. But the great fact remained that out of that grave of buried hopes sprang a second life, partaking to the last of the source to which it owed its being. So, when we turn from the love story in the early poem to the last of its author's finished works, we find in 'Kenelm Chillingly' the same incidents and emotions producing the same effects, and culminating in the same elevated aims. The poem was

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composed within the opening gates of life, the prose romance under the hovering shadow of death; and, between the date of the first and that of the last, the author had passed through nearly half a century of incessant intellectual labour. Yet 'Viola' is the prototype of 'Lily.' Her epitaph was written, not in the summer of 1824, but in the winter of 1873. And these are the words of it:—

'How strange it is,' said Kenelm, still bending over the parapet, 'that throughout all my desultory wanderings I have ever been attracted towards the sight and sound of running waters, even those of the humblest rill! Of what thoughts, of what dreams, of what memories, colouring the history of my past, the waves of the humblest rill could speak, were the waves themselves not such supreme philosophers—roused, indeed, on their surface, vexed by a check to their own course, but so indifferent to all that makes gloom or death to the mortals who think, and dream, and feel, beside their banks.' And he adds: 'Ah! perhaps we must, at whatever cost to ourselves—we *must* go through the romance of life before we clearly detect what is grand in its realities. I can no longer lament that I stand estranged from the objects and pursuits of my race. I have learned how much I have with them in common. I have known love; I have known sorrow.'

Those thoughts, those dreams, those memories, awakened by the murmur of the humblest rill, and colouring the whole history of his past, were not Kenelm's only. They were his also who conceived the character of Kenelm in some aspect of the image of his own. Nor were they the figments of a poetic imagination, but the voices of a personal experience still mingling with the sound of running waters some cherished echo of an old romance, first vocal to the writer's heart in the summer days of his boyhood, among those 'green sequestered meadows through which the humble Brent crept along his snake-like course,' and under 'that singular dwarfed tree which overshadowed the little stream, throwing its lonely boughs half-way to the opposite margin.'

My father read the manuscript of 'Kenelm' to my wife and myself, and at particular parts of it he could not restrain his tears. Throughout the day (it was New Year's Eve—the eve of the year of his own death) on which he finished the chapter describing Kenelm's sufferings above the grave of 'Lily,' he was profoundly dejected, listless, broken; and in his face there was the worn look of a man who has just passed through the last paroxysm of a passionate grief. We did not then know to what the incidents referred, and we wondered that the creations of his fancy should exercise such power over him. They were not creations of fancy, but the memories of fifty years past.]

CHAPTER III.

(Autobiographical.)

WINDERMERE. 1824. Æt. 21.

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THE sun shone brightly over the Lake of Windermere as I came to its gradual shores. I stood long by the margin, the gentle waves surging at my feet, and the trees reflected dark and deep upon the mirror. And 'Here,' I said, 'Peace revisits me; here will I fix myself for a time.'

As I walked on towards the inn at Ambleside, I passed by a solitary house, in the window of which was written 'Lodgings to Let.' I entered; was shown by a dark-eyed, smiling, maid-servant into an old-fashioned parlour, that looked along the still greensward towards the still blue lake, and a roomy clean bedroom on the first floor. The apartment pleased me. I inquired the terms. The maid could not say; the master was out. I said I would call in the evening, and went on to my inn. At dinner I asked the waiter, who lived in the house I had thus seen.

He stared at me, and changed colour. 'One Mr. W.,' he said, after a pause.

'Any family?'

'No. . . He is quite alone.'

The waiter was hurrying out of the room.

'Stop, I think of lodging there for some weeks.'

'Better not,' said the waiter quickly; 'you are very young, sir.'

Away he went, and in a few minutes the landlady entered.

'The waiter says you want lodgings, sir,' said she, eyeing me with an attention that gradually became more respectful. 'Will you allow me to recommend you what I think would suit?'

'You are extremely kind; but I have taken a great fancy to an apartment I have already seen.'

'Mr. W.'s? Oh! don't go there, sir.'

'Why not?'

'Mr. W. has a bad character. Nobody speaks to him.'

'That proves nothing. Pray go on.'

'They say he was a smuggler or pirate once.'

'Is that the reason why nobody speaks to him?'

'No. There are worse stories.'

'What of?'

'Murder!' said the woman, whispering, and left the room.

That word certainly gave me a chill, and I resolved to renounce the lodgings. Meanwhile, I strolled forth, and, wandering along the margin of the lake, passed by a small boat moored to the side. I stood there, gazing on the placid water, and lost in reverie, when a voice behind me said,—

'Would you like a row? Shall I lend you the boat, sir?'

I turned, and beheld a man, middle-aged, and striking from the muscular development of his frame and the rugged power of his features.

'I am very much obliged by the offer, and will accept it.'

The man began to unfasten the boat. As he presented to me the oar, he surveyed me wistfully.

'I beg your pardon, sir; but are you the young gentleman who looked at the rooms to let in the house yonder—my house?'

My eye followed the direction towards which he pointed, and I saw the quiet, dull, house which I had visited, half hid amidst heavy foliage.

'Yes,' said I shortly; 'but I think I shall now take a lodging elsewhere.'

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‘I understand—they have set you against me.’ The man spoke bitterly. ‘But it is no matter, you are welcome to the boat all the same; it will be at your service whenever you like to use it. Be good enough to moor it in the same place. Good evening, sir.’

‘Stay—I will look again at the lodgings; perhaps I may be your tenant after all.’

‘Tenant to wicked W.!’ cried the man, with a hollow laugh. ‘Don’t think of it.’ And he strode away.

I entered the boat, and pushed from the shore. The man’s voice and manner moved me much. I felt an irresistible desire to become his lodger. So, when I had made my excursion, I refastened the boat, and walked up the grassy fields towards the house. The maid-servant was again at the threshold, and welcomed me with a smile. She had a lively but innocent expression of countenance that prepossessed me. She did not look as if she would have served a very wicked man.

After a second glance over the rooms, I asked to see Mr. W., in order to know the terms, and Mr. W. appeared. He named a price for board and lodging, which I thought moderate; and I agreed to enter the next day. Then, leaning towards him, I held out my hand.

‘Mr. W., it is true they have given me a bad character of you; but it does not seem to me possible that you can have any wish to harm me. At all events, though you are a very strong-looking fellow, I don’t fear you.’

I laughed as I spoke. The man coloured. He pressed my hand roughly.

‘I wish you could guess what I feel,’ said he, with a voice that trembled. ‘But if ever I can serve you,—’ He hurried away.

The next day I was settled in my new apartments. I wrote to Penrith for my luggage, and soon made myself at home.

I had hoped that I should see much of my host, and hear

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his own account of his life—his own version of the stories against him; but in this I was disappointed. He systematically avoided me as much as possible. When I made some pretext to send for him, he confined himself strictly to replies to my questions, and showed, in short, a reserve that would have baffled a curiosity and damped an assurance much more obstinate than mine. I now ceased to trouble my head about him. I had brought with me few books—the works only of two authors: Musgrave's edition of Euripides (a very bad one), and a pocket Shakespeare, without note or comment. Upon these two great masters I lavished all my attention. I read and pondered over them again and again, with that earnest assiduity which leaves behind it durable, though often unconscious, influence. They who view my fictions with a partial criticism may perceive, perhaps, the effect that study has produced upon their character: a desire to investigate the springs of passion and analyse the human heart, which is begotten in one who contemplates Shakespeare as a model; and a tendency to arrest narrative, often to the injury of its dramatic progress, by moralising deductions and sententious aphorisms, which the young student of Euripides might naturally contract. It might be supposed that these authors would incline any attempts at composition towards poetry; but I had now made a resolute compact with myself to face the future, and poetry led me back to the past. I determined to see what I could do in prose; and, without a single prose book at hand, sat down to form for myself a style. I found it exceedingly difficult; but the difficulty piqued my pride and nerved my perseverance. I wrote at first very slowly, turning and returning sentence after sentence; never satisfied till the thought I desired to convey found its best expression, and the period in which it was cased glided off into harmonious cadence. At first, I considered a page a day to be a grand achievement; gradually ease came. But it was not till years afterwards that I attained to rapid facility; and in doing so, forced

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myself to resign much that would better please the taste, in order not to lose that dash and intrepidity of diction by which alone (at least in works of imagination) we can hurry the reader into passion. For art in fiction is somewhat like art in oratory ; the language it uses must often, with purpose, be rough, loose, and slovenly. The evidence of impulse must preponderate over that of preparation.

In these first essays of prose composition I wrote much that has since been turned into use. A slight tale called 'Mortimer' made the groundwork of 'Pelham ;' and some 'Sketches of Men and Manners' will be found incorporated in 'England and the English.'

These studies occupied me till the afternoon, when I dined simply enough. Afterwards, I either pushed my boat into the lake, or wandered forth amidst the hills and valleys—a volume of Shakespeare or Euripides always with me, to take out if my thoughts, in spite of myself, became gloomy. By the moonlight I returned home, and, seated by the open window, studied again till I heard the clock strike one. I did not seek acquaintance with the great men who then adorned those scenes. What I sought, and what I wanted, was solitude—the quiet comporting, as it were, of my own mind. This was what I found.

CHAPTER, IV.

(Autobiographical.)

AN ADVENTURE. 1824. ÆT. 21.

I HAD here but one adventure worth, perhaps, the recital. I had been told of a spot little visited at that time by ordinary tourists, for the way was long and the road bad, but of which the picturesque beauties were said to be sufficient to repay all toil. One day I hired a horse and took my solitary way across the mountains towards this place. I rode very slowly; night closed in before I reached the spot; but night bright and starry, and more suited to the sombre sublimity of the landscape than the beams of day. Few scenes ever impressed me more than that which now awed my eye. A lake that seemed 'as ebon black and yet as crystal clear' (like the pool described in the first book of 'King Arthur'), surrounded by sheer, abrupt, dismal cliffs. Unlike landscapes of wide extent, the effect of which is never definite, in the aspect of this spot there was a singular concentration of savage gloom. The eye took in the whole, and the whole produced its single stern impression on the mind. It seemed a place fitted for the rites of enchantment, or for deeds of crime. I turned away at last with a superstitious dread.

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My horse, but a very sorry animal, was thoroughly wearied out. I expected every moment that he would fall under me. I had been informed that there was no inn in the neighbourhood; but that there was a cottage near at hand, at which I might find accommodation for the night. I must have passed

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the cottage unawares during the fit of absence or abstraction in which I had left the dark, solemn lake. For I had already gone some miles and not noticed a roof-top, when suddenly I saw a light at a little distance. I made my way towards it, and came to a large lonely cottage; from the window of which the light streamed.

I knocked at the door repeatedly before a voice asked 'Who's there?'

I replied that I was a traveller who wanted shelter. The door was unbarred, and a tall, lean man, in a peasant's dress, stood at the threshold. The man surveyed me from head to foot, shading a candle with his hand, as I repeated my request. At length he said, very surlily,—

'You may come in.'

'But what shall I do with my horse?'

'There is a shed at the back; put him there.'

'Will you show me the way?'

'No. You can't miss it, if you have eyes.'

'You are very uncivil.'

'I don't keep an inn. I'm not in the habit of taking in travellers.'

'Perhaps, then, I had better go on? Is it very far to Keswick?'

'Yes.'

'How many miles?'

'I don't know.'

It was a vain boast of mine to proceed to Keswick; the horse could not have gone another mile. So I made a virtue of necessity, and went round in search of the shed. I found a tumbledown place, with some dirty litter, on which reposed a sow, that grunted very indignantly at my entrance. I took off the bridle and saddle, discovered some mouldy hay in a corner, and strewed it before the horse. The poor animal laid himself down at once, and bent his head languidly over the untempting food. I then went back to the cottage.

The man was standing by the hearth ; and upon it burned a tolerable fire.

‘ You can give me a bed, then ? ’ said I, doubtfully.

‘ Yes ; quite good enough, I should think, for you. I have had gentlemen stop here before, though I don’t make a practice of it. But they paid me handsomely.’

‘ So will I.’

‘ Humph ! you may have the bed. I will go and put on the sheets.’

‘ Stay—can you give me anything to eat ? I have not tasted food since morning.’

‘ Well, I believe there is some bread in the larder, and some milk. I’m very poor.’

‘ The bread and the milk will do. But, since I see a fire and a kettle, perhaps without much trouble I can have some tea ? ’

‘ Yes ; but it is trouble, this hour of the night.’

‘ But I will pay for the trouble. Come, my man, be good-natured, and don’t speak to me as if I was a beggar.’

Not a bit less sullen, the man went to his cupboard, took out some bread and the requisites for tea, and in a few minutes more I was at my simple meal.

‘ You do not live here quite alone ? ’

‘ Yes I do.’

‘ Have you no family ? ’

‘ What’s that to you ? I don’t ask you questions. Make haste and finish. I want to go to bed. You must be away early ; I’m off to my work at six. Now I’ll go and put on the sheets.’

My surly host opened a door in an angle of the room and went upstairs. Left alone, an uneasy suspicion seized me. I could not tell why, but I thought there was danger near. I had half a mind, even now, to proceed to Keswick on foot, leaving my horse behind me. Revolving this idea, I walked mechanically towards the cottage door, and found it locked—

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the key gone. The man must have taken this precaution while I was engaged on my supper of crusts. I had not time to consider how far this circumstance was a natural security against robbers from without, or an ominous design upon the guest within, when my host reappeared. I then examined him more carefully than I had yet done. His countenance was very sinister, with high cheek bones, and so pale as to be almost cadaverous. He had small, cunning, fierce eyes, ragged, bushy eyebrows, and a nose beaked like a bird of prey's. But I did not regard his countenance so much as his frame. Naturally enough, I desired to estimate his physical strength in comparison with my own. He was an inch or so taller than myself; very bony, though so lean, with great powerful hands used to work, and at the age when man is strongest—between forty and fifty. I was not rendered more assured by my survey; still, I thought he would find it hard to overpower me, provided I was not taken by surprise. And, after all, my suspicions seemed to my common sense so improbable.¹

'You have not only locked your door but taken away the key,' said I. 'Did you wish to prevent my leaving you?'

The man scowled, but I met his frown with so careless and determined an air, that he soon quailed.

'What do I care if you leave me? That is your look-out. Go, if you like; but you'll pay me all the same for my trouble.'

'No; I'll stay. Show me the bedroom.'

My host nodded, and took the way up the narrow stairs. He showed me into a room cleaner and neater than I had hoped for, sulkily wished me 'good night,' and in spite of my remonstrance took away the candle. He was not going to run the risk of having the curtains take fire and his house burned down.

[¹ There would seem to be some reminiscence of this adventure in the opening scene of 'Ernest Maltravers.'—L.]

However, the starlight shone through the lattice; I was not quite in the dark. I examined the door; it had no lock, and would not shut close. I took the precaution to drag, as noiselessly as I could, a chest of drawers from the opposite side of the room, and placed it against the door; then I undressed and went to bed; but, tired as I was, I could not sleep. An irresistible foreboding kept me wakeful and vigilant. I was haunted by the thought of murder. If I closed my eyes I saw again the black lake, and a voice seemed to arise from it and cry 'Beware!' I had but one weapon about me—a case-knife; but that weapon was sufficient to harden my nerves, with the consciousness that I was not without self-defence. I opened the knife and laid it at hand on the chair beside the bed. Two or three hours must have thus passed; and I was rendered the more wakeful because at times I heard steps moving about the room below. At length these steps began to mount the stairs; the stairs creaked under the tread. Does he sleep above? Strange, if so, he should have sate up thus late. The steps passed by my door, and presently I heard the handle turn, and the door made a dull sound against the barrier I had placed. I called out aloud, 'Who is there?' The sound ceased; all was still. By-and-by I heard the steps descending. I breathed more freely. I thought I was safe now, and in a little while allowed myself to doze, though uneasily. I soon caught myself starting up in my bed. The hand was again at the door; again the same dull sound against the chest of drawers; it groaned and yielded gratingly to the pressure. I sprang to my feet, grasping my knife. 'Take care how you come in, I am armed!'

Silence again: and again the steps crept down. But I was now fairly exasperated. My nerves were set on edge, as it were; I could not endure the repetition of this dastardly kind of danger. I felt ashamed of myself, that I did not go forth to brave and finish it at once. Was it not, indeed, safer so to do? Obeying the abrupt impulse, I pushed aside

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the drawers, and, knife in hand, went boldly down the stairs. Perhaps it is well that I did. The man was bending over the fire, his back turned to me. He had evidently not heard my step. He seemed in thought. Upon the table before him a candle still burned, and by the candle lay a bill, such as is used in chopping wood. My eye took in all at a glance. I advanced with a rapid step up to my host, and laid my left hand on his shoulder.

‘How come you to be sitting here at two o’clock in the morning? How dare you attempt to enter my room? Go to bed this instant, or——’

The man slipped from my hand, and stretched his own towards the bill on the table. Aware of his intention, I drew back and upset the table with my foot. The bill fell to the floor, and the candle, falling too, was extinguished. We only saw each other by the dull light of the dying fire.

‘If you attempt to stoop, to lay hand on that bill, you are a dead man! I will stab you to the heart; take care!’

The man was taken by surprise. He stood still, staring at me with his jaw dropping. The wild beast in him was daunted. I set my foot firmly on the bill.

‘You are a fool!’ said I; ‘you meant to murder me; but had you done so, you would have been seized. I am known in the neighbourhood—it would be known where I had slept—you would have no chance to escape detection. As it is, I am armed; you are not. Go to your room this moment, and thank Heaven on your knees that you are saved from a great crime and the gallows!’

‘I am very poor,’ said the man falteringly. ‘I did not mean it at first. I’m very sorry.’

He began to sob. I took him by the arm and led him to the stairs, like a child. He then went up the steps of his own accord, and I left him in a kind of loft under the roof. He had thrown himself on his pallet, muttering indistinctly, though he had ceased to sob.

I returned to the kitchen, picked up the bill, and carried it to my own room. I was disturbed no more, and fell asleep for an hour or two towards daybreak. I was awakened by the sun shining on the lattice. I dressed, and went downstairs. My host was already in the room, seated at the table, his hands drooping on his knees, and a stolid, insensible expression, almost that of imbecility, on his hard features. He had opened the cottage door, and I went out at once, without heeding him; thinking it best to secure my horse before he came to parley. To my surprise, I found the animal already saddled and bridled; it even seemed to have been rubbed down. I led the horse to the cottage door, and then called out to the man to come forth. He came very slowly, and looking down. I spoke to him seriously; but my eloquent preaching seemed quite thrown away. He attempted no excuse: he made, indeed, no answer. He gave me the notion of idiocy. But when I said, 'If you are so poor that poverty tempted you, you might have appealed to my benevolence,' a kind of wistful, avaricious glance shot from his eye, and he stretched forth his hand. I took out some silver. He clutched at it eagerly, then nodded as if satisfied, and turned back into his house. I mounted my horse and rode on. I passed through the fantastic defiles of Borrowdale and reached Keswick.

I found an occasion afterwards to make some inquiry about the character of my intended murderer; but nothing seemed known against it. He was considered a harmless, industrious peasant, but rude in his manners, and defective in understanding. Had I been older I should have judged it a duty towards others to inform a magistrate of what had passed; but the propriety of doing so did not then occur to me. Very likely it was a single devilish idea that had blundered into the man's dull head, and never appeared there again. However, I could not help thinking, 'I left at Windermere a host against whose character everyone speaks ill, and I have found nothing to blame in him; to find

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another host who designed my assassination, but against whose character not a syllable is said.'

After this adventure I did not remain long in those beautiful districts. When I took leave of my landlord, on paying the bill, he said to me with some embarrassment—

'I doubt if I have not charged you too high, sir; I did not think you would be contented with such simple fare.'

'Indeed, my fare has been excellent, and your charge most moderate.'

Wicked W. still seemed embarrassed.

'You are very fond of reading, sir?'

'Yes; that is true.'

'And young gentlemen must want money for their studies. In short, sir, if you would only pay me half, and keep the rest to buy books, I should be very much obliged to you, and much better satisfied. You see, sir, you have been kind to me, and came here in spite of what was said of me, and other lodgers will come now.'

'Mr. W., you have a good heart; I believe nothing said against you. I only wish you had let me see more of you. Why did you avoid me so much?'

'It might have done you harm, if people hereabouts said you had grown intimate with wicked W.; otherwise, I did wish to talk to you very much. But do take back this money!'

'I will take back one sovereign, and buy some books with it, as a memorial of you and Windermere. I would do as you wish, but I am well off. And now, will you tell me something of your history, and explain why people say of you what I am sure you do not deserve?'

But Mr. W. sighed, and shook his head.

'If ever you fall in love, sir,' said he, after a pause, 'don't be too much in love—not enough in love to be jealous. Jealousy makes a man mad, and brings the devil into his heart; so that if he does not commit crime, he may think it.'

So saying, he left me musing.

CHAPTER V.

*(Autobiographical.)*VISIT TO MR. OWEN. 1824. *Æt.* 21.

I SET out on foot as before, bending my way northward. The pretty little maid-servant bade 'God bless me,' with tears in her eyes. My host did not appear, but I saw him at the window. He waved his hand to me kindly.

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And so hey for the Borders! and on with firm step into Scotland. But I did not walk all the way. On the last stage or two towards Edinburgh I took a place in the coach, and made acquaintance with two brothers, who seemed to be in trade. One, much older than the other, was evidently snubbing the cadet; but to me they were both of them pleasant, and I found their conversation instructive. We took up our abode in the same inn at Edinburgh—an excellent inn it was. I am sorry to say I forget the sign.

I came to the Falls of Clyde, and was shown over the grounds that then belonged to Lady Mary Ross. The guide took me to see the leap across the river which Scott, in 'Old Mortality,' ascribes to Morton, on escaping from Burley's Cave.

'The leap does not strike me as very formidable,' said I.

'I should like to see you take it!' replied the guide sneeringly.

The sneer put me on my mettle. Without a moment's reflection, I drew back a few paces, and sprang lightly across. When I was on the other side, and looked at the depth of the

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stream below, and remembered that I could not swim, a sort of *ex post facto* terror came over me. I turned sick and trembled. I would not have leapt over again for a king's ransom.

I went thence to the house of Mr. Owen, the celebrated philanthropist. I had no letter of introduction to him; but I had heard enough of his hospitality to know that I should be received with welcome, as a student of Cambridge. Mr. Owen was from home at his mills. Mrs. Owen with great courtesy pressed me to stay to dinner. I talked to her about her husband's schools and his schemes. She did not seem, poor woman, to approve much of either. By-and-by Mr. Owen came in: a man of singular simplicity in appearance and manner, with a quiet, low voice, a logical mode of arranging his sentences, and altogether as unlike an enthusiast as a man could be. I listened with wonder to his projects for upsetting society and remodelling the world. To upset society and remodel the world might be very desirable. I did not wonder at the idea: I wondered at the sublime confidence with which Mr. Owen anticipated its speedy realisation.

'I have made great progress within the last year,' said he, with a sobriety of tone that was very imposing. 'Before 1830, Parliament will have come round to my opinion. All men are guided by self-interest: my system is for the interest of all men.'

Mr. Owen insisted on my passing the night at his house, and the next morning he accompanied me over his schools. It was a spectacle worth the seeing. The education seemed to me admirable. Never at any more aristocratic school have I beheld so many intelligent faces, or witnessed the same general amount of information. And the children, in their neat, uniform dresses, looked so clean and so happy! I stood by his side observing them, with the tears starting from my eyes. Involuntarily I pressed the hand of the kind enthusiast, and began to think he was here, in good earnest, laying the founda-

tions of a system in which evil passions might be stifled from childhood, and serene Intelligence govern the human race without Kings, Lords, or Commons.

Towards the afternoon I left the philanthropist, and renewed my pedestrian tour. I stopped at a cottage to rest and refresh myself on the way. An old woman reading her Bible received me very hospitably.

Full of Mr. Owen and his schools, I began talking of both in high praise. The old woman fired up.

‘Eh, sir, a vera bad man!’

‘Bad man!’

‘And has done a deal of mischief. The bairns turned out vera ill!’

‘How is that?’

‘They have never been taught *this*,’ and she laid her locked hands on the Bible. ‘They have no religion, and what is to support them, I should like to know, when they go into the world?’

I was silent. Mr. Owen, indeed, had said tranquilly, that he would not be so wrong as to instil belief. Belief was voluntary; it should be left to the judgment of men full grown. I fear the old woman was right, and that few of those poor happy children kept the promise with Fortune that their intelligence had pledged to her.

CHAPTER VI.

(Autobiographical.)

AN ADVENTURE IN THE HIGHLANDS. 1824. Æt. 21.

‘Edina, Scotia’s darling seat,
All hail thy palaces and towers!’

BOOK IV. I CHANTED these words aloud as I entered beautiful Edinburgh! I was sensible at once to the poetry of the capital. All youth, nurtured by Romance, must love Scotland. Her stormy history, her dark legends, her passionate poets, her luminous philosophers, all inspired me with tender veneration as I stood gazing across the stream upon the tall gables of the old town.

‘I wish,’ said I to myself, ‘that I had some Scottish blood in me; that I was something to this city and this people.’ I little thought then that a day would come when literature would give me the tie that birth denied; that I, lone and obscure young Englishman, should one day be elected by the Scottish youth president of the renowned University which was the boast of that famous capital, and in preference to the Ducal head of the Campbells. After a short sojourn at Edinburgh, I proceeded towards the Highlands, still on foot.

One day, as I was striding lustily along the high road and talking aloud to myself, a young man leaped over a hedge or fence, lighting so close to my side that it seemed like an attack. I sprang back and raised my stick in involuntary self-defence.

‘Don’t be alarmed—no cause!’ said the stranger, taking

off his hat carelessly, and wiping his brows. 'I was trying for a short cut across the fields, and lost it.'

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I saw no necessity for reply to this remark, and walked quietly on. My first quick glance at the stranger's countenance had prepossessed me against him. I am not sure that first impressions are not true forewarnings—at least nine times out of ten. To my surprise and displeasure, the young man overtook me and walked by my side; talking easily, with an impudent, familiar air, upon the weather, the roads, the country, what not. At first, I replied only by dry monosyllables, which by no means abashed the young man's assurance. By degrees the assurance itself began to amuse me, and my answers grew less repellent. At length we were conversing as sociably as if we had known each other for years; my first impressions were worn away; nay, they seemed to me preposterously unjust, for certainly the countenance that had inspired me with distrust and dislike was acute in its expression, rather handsome in its contour, very striking altogether. The lad was dark and pale, with long heavy curls, raven black; his eyes were brilliant, his features aquiline and Jewish. He might be two or three years older than myself; his frame very slight but very wiry; he was about the middle height, or a little below it; he walked with a stoop. His style of conversation puzzled me extremely. I could not the least make out what he was; of what calling or what rank. At times he quoted songs and novels, so he was not without education; and now and then came an eloquent, quaint sentence, which imposed on me as original and clever. But then, he used a great many slang words I never heard before, though I had heard slang enough at Cambridge. His talk soon glided on to that topic in which young men generally feel most at home with each other—women. He spoke of the sex like a man of supreme *bonnes fortunes*, and with a strange mixture of cynicism and warmth. Thence he diverged to London life in general, especially theatres—seemed to know the peculiar

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merits, failings, and private history of every actor and actress. He spoke much, too, about places of amusement of which I knew nothing—'Shades,' and 'Cider Cellars,' and 'White Conduit House.' Nothing could be less in harmony with stern, severe Scotland than the talk of this tourist from the regions of Bow. He seemed London born and bred all over. Not exactly what we call cockney—too wild and lawless for that tame animal; nor had he the cockney pronunciation, nor the cockney way of viewing things; still, Londoner he clearly was, and a kind of Londoner wholly new to me.

In return for many questions as to myself—my condition, my birth, my plans, the contents of my knapsack—which he had bluntly put to me, and which I had as bluffly parried, I asked him point blank 'What brought *him* into Scotland?'

'Oh, a lark,' said he; 'and, besides, I have business here—looking after property,' he added, with a mock air of importance.

'You have property in Scotland?'

'I did not say that! I said I was looking after property.'

'I don't quite understand you—looking after property to buy!'

'Well, I rather guess it will be property to sell. Aren't you thirsty? I have some capital whisky here.' He pulled out a large dram-flask, and after rallying me for my refusal with a licence of expression that might have justly offended a prouder man, emptied the contents at a draught.

'Not raw whisky, I hope,' said I.

'Spooney,' quoth my new friend, contemptuously; 'raw, and no mistake! Water spoils whisky.'

After he had taken this villanous potation, the stranger's tone and manner began to alter notably. Hitherto, if impudent, there had been about him a kind of swaggering good-humour; now he grew sneering and offensive, and seemed evidently disposed to pick a quarrel.

The evening had already darkened. We were descending

a long hill, at the bottom of which, about a mile distant, lay the town that I designed for my night's resting-place.

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Hitherto carts, horsemen, foot-travellers, had passed us pretty often. Now, the road seemed quite deserted save by ourselves—both behind and before. The stranger's obvious intention to affront me did not much rouse my anger, but it wakened my prudence. He must have some motive for it—it was not intoxication. The whisky had not made him drunk. His step was as firm as mine. I observed him glancing at me from time to time, and sidling close and closer to me. I grasped my stick with a firmer hand, and looked him full in the face very gravely; but I kept silent. Certainly I had no wish to quarrel; I saw no credit to be got by it. He was obviously much my inferior in rank; no gentleman wants to fight with an inferior if he can help it. If fighting were to come, it must be an honour thrust upon me.

Presently my companion fell back a little behind me. I turned sharply round and saw, for the first time, in his hand, a short, black, murderous-looking weapon—a life-preserver.

‘Walk on before me, sir,’ said I, halting.

The young man crouched down as if intent to spring, his eyes glittering and his teeth set. I raised my stick, which was a very stout one, and awaited the rush he appeared to meditate. Suddenly he returned his weapon to his pocket, and burst out laughing.

‘Oh, oh! I’ve frightened you, have I? What fun! Ha! ha! you took me for a highway robber! How my granny will laugh when I tell her!’

‘Well, sir, at all events, I neither like nor understand these tricks upon travellers; you have been very rude and impertinent for the last quarter of an hour, and I must now decline any further conversation with you. If you are going the same road, please to walk first.’

The young man folded his arms as if with a tragic air, and scanned me from head to foot majestically. Nevertheless,

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beneath that theatrical dignity, I fancied I discovered a furtive, stealthy meaning. He was examining, perhaps, whether or not his strength and activity, with the aid of his weapon, would enable him to master me, and possess himself of my knapsack, about the contents of which he had been so inquisitive. I must own the truth. I am ever habitually fearless, but I never felt so much in fear of any man as I did then of that boy.¹ Strange! for I believe I was stronger than he, quite as active, and my stick was a match for his life-preserver; but it was the sort of dread one has of some smaller kind of wild beast—a mountain cat, for instance. I felt at once that this creature was out of the pale of society, that he belonged to another world than the human honest world of Law. He stood there, an image of fraud, and cunning, and violence. My breath came quick; another moment, I should have rushed at him, less from valour than apprehension—from the quick tremor of the nerves and the fear of being taken unawares. The stranger suddenly dropped his arms, whistled, went on a few paces, then laid his hand on a gate and swung himself over into the fields. I did not like this movement, but walked forward, in the very centre of the road, looking behind and before, expecting him to jump forth every moment, and hastening my step, that I might reach the town before it was quite dark. However, I gained my goal safely, and saw the stranger no more—until many years afterwards.

[The sequel of this story may as well be given here. During the composition of 'Pelham' my father occasionally visited the thieves' quarters in London, with a view to the descriptions of them given in that novel. From the frequenters of a 'bouzing-ken' thus visited, he heard admiring anecdotes of the

[¹ I have seen my father more than once under conditions of imminent danger, but never saw him evince the least symptom of fear, except in the presence of a wasp. His terror of wasps was constitutional and uncontrollable; he inherited it from his father, and so did his eldest brother. He frequently dreamt of those insects, and always reckoned such dreams as ominous of coming evil or trouble to him.—L.]

cleverness, courage, and brilliant social qualities, of one of their absent comrades or leaders, whom, so far as I can recollect the story often told me by my father, they named Wolfe, and seemed to regard as their professional hero. Presently this man entered the room; where he was received with enthusiasm. He immediately recognised my father, approached him, and with a somewhat patronising cordiality claimed his acquaintance as an old travelling-companion. 'Sorry,' he said, 'that our last meeting in the Highlands was so short. But my ears were quicker than yours, and I had heard along the road sounds which made me apprehensive that our agreeable intercourse might be interrupted. Two's company, you know, three's none. Delighted to renew so pleasant an acquaintance in such distinguished society. All friends here, you see. Charming women, and men of the rarest accomplishment. I do the honours.'

And he did do the honours of the filthy place, with the airs and graces of a Charles Surface of low life.

My father never saw this man again, but some years after his marriage, he read in the newspapers an account of the pursuit and capture of Wolfe by the police on the charge of having murdered a woman.]

CHAPTER VII.

(Autobiographical.)

SCARBOROUGH. 1824. Æt. 21.

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I HAVE little more to say as to my Scottish expedition. I continued it, chiefly on foot. I lay down to rest one night under a hedge in the field of Bannockburn. My enthusiastic reveries kept me from sleeping. I remember that night well—the moon was so clear and splendid, the wide landscape looked so still and ghostly. And there I lay, wide awake yet dreaming—dreaming back the glorious battle, and, fonder of Liberty than of England, calling up the image of victorious Bruce! Indeed, I often passed the nights (in the Highlands especially) in the open air—and happy nights they were! Ah, youth, youth!

I did not penetrate far into the Highlands—for a very good reason. The money I had brought with me from Cambridge (about 16*l.*) was expended; and, retracing my steps, I found myself one day in the streets of Glasgow without a shilling in my pocket. Musing what to do in that dilemma, all of a sudden, to my astonishment, I saw my eldest brother walking leisurely towards me. He, too, had been visiting Scotland, in a more aristocratic fashion than I—paying visits, &c. He laughed at my penniless condition, and lent me all I wanted to continue my travels. But I was now bound homeward. I returned to Edinburgh, and, resolving to reach London by sea, engaged a place in a vessel from Leith. I suffered, however, so much from sea-sickness one dreary night, which seemed the

commencement of eternity (and not a blissful eternity), that I made them put me on shore at Scarborough. Myself and my luggage were conveyed to a small commercial inn. I was too dead to the things of this world to care what they did with me. After an hour or two's repose in a very small, dingy bedroom, I heard a bell ring, and a dirty waiter came to tell me that dinner was served. I then learned that it was the custom at the inn (as it was at most inns at Scarborough) to take one's meals at a *table d'hôte*; and the waiter obligingly informed me that I was at no great expense for my livelihood—board and lodging (three meals in twelve hours besides tea) at 3s. 6d. a day.

Much marvelling whom I should meet at the *table d'hôte*, and finding, to my great surprise, that my stomach had recovered its late loathing at all suggestion of food, I descended into the dining-room and took my place at the bottom of a long and crowded table. A gentleman seated next to me, who (as I afterwards learned) had 'a good business in the hat line,' began to break the ice sociably,—

'A foreigner, I presume, sir?'

'Who is a foreigner?' said I, looking round innocently.

'Beg pardon, surely you are; but you don't speak English amiss. Something betrays you in the accent, though!'

Accent! the man was talking broad Yorkshire, which I do not pretend to render in my translation of his dialect.

I resolved to humour his mistake, and replied, in half-broken English, that I did not think he could have found me out before I had opened my lips. My gentleman was mightily pleased at his acuteness.

'We Yorkshiremen are keen,' said he, rubbing his hands and chuckling.

What was there about me that betrayed the foreigner?

My long curling hair, I suppose, and my moustache; which last I had suffered to grow, with a virginal pair of whiskers, during my travels.

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'But surely you ben't a Frenchman?' he said, rather in alarm and disgust.

'No.'

'A German? He knew many Germans at Manchester, very like me—that is, they had all fair hair and blue eyes.'

'No.'

'A Pole, then—banished by that horrid tyrannical Emperor of All the Russias?'

I sighed and nodded assent. My friend, with this, became very compassionate and friendly. 'How did I support myself? Did I teach languages? Did I play the piano, or what?'

I supported myself by—conjuring! The man stared aghast, and I took that opportunity to monopolise the last potato in a dish which the waiter was about to hand to my new friend. The act was in character with my profession.

'Was it a good livelihood?'

'Very!'

'What could I do?'

'Creep into a quart bottle. I had crept into one when the armies of the Czar were in pursuit of me.'

Here the Yorkshireman began to look incredulous; but I ate my potato with imperturbable gravity, and, to change the conversation, began to admire the ladies, of whom there was a goodly array of all sizes, shapes, costumes, and ages.

'Well,' said the hatter, 'I should think you had better conjure yourself a rich wife; you are a good-looking young fellow enough!'

'The very thing I want to do; I'm not mercenary, but still, some money, just to keep the pot boiling.'

'To be sure. You see that lady opposite in the yellow turban? she's a young widow—rich as a Jew! Her husband was a great tinman, and left her lots of——'

'Tin,' said I, dryly.

The fun pleased my friend mightily, and he offered to pre-

sent me to the lady; in return for which courtesy I promised that he should be my bridesman, if ever I came to marry her. His young widow was about the same age as my mother, looking very hot and very swarthy; but a fine woman—as women go—much too good for a Polish conjuror.

After dinner a formal introduction between myself and the lady took place, and I flatter myself that I might, had the stars consented, have been her second choice. But ‘life is thorny, and youth is vain,’ and the next day I conjured myself off to the head hotel of the place. Here, if I lost the love of the widow, I made the acquaintance of a very disconsolate widower, who served me afterwards as a hint for Mr. Graves, in the comedy of ‘Money.’ He seemed the most melancholy of men, and secured my interest by his pathetic allusions to his recent irreparable loss—his sainted wife—and the indifference with which he henceforth regarded all womankind. A handsome, portly man, nevertheless; with a very good appetite. Shortly afterwards, I formed a familiar flirtation with a pretty and lively girl, who informed me that I must take great care not to speak to her if she met me in the streets, for she had ‘a friend’ who was very rich, but very jealous.

One day, as I was walking along the sands with the inconsolable widower, and striving in vain to comfort him, this young lady tripped by us. Forgetting her admonition, or rather looking upon my friend, the widower, as a man who had no eyes on this side the grave, I smiled and nodded at her. She made no reciprocal signal of acquaintance, but blushed scarlet and hurried on.

‘I am shocked at you, young man!’ said the widower, very abruptly.

‘Shocked? young man? what do you mean?’ said I, my dignity much offended.

‘At your age—a profligate already! I grieve for your poor mother’s sake—a most excellent woman! My lost wife’s uncle, the bishop, knew her well.’

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'Really, sir, you will provoke me to say something rude.
What have I done?'

'Done! Ah! what indeed? How did you know that
young woman? Are you trying to seduce her?'

'Seduce her, no! But you must excuse me if I say that,
though I respect your griefs—and years——'

'My years, sir!'

'We shall quarrel, I see, if we talk longer. Good day.'

'Good heavens!' cried my young flirt, when we next met
as appointed, in the dusk of eve, 'how could you behave so
cruelly? I am afraid you have ruined me.'

'What now?'

'Why, you nodded to me when you were walking
with——'

'A disconsolate widower?'

'MY FRIEND!'

CHAPTER VIII.

*(Autobiographical.)*LIFE WITH THE GIPSIES. 1824. Æt. 21.

ONCE more on foot, homewards. Time, sunset. Scene, the highway road; so curving as to be lost from sight at the distance of fifty yards, between a wood on one side, a broad patch of common sward on the other.

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VIII.Æt. 21

‘Shall I tell you your fortune, my pretty young gentleman?’

The voice, young and silvery, startled me from my reverie; and by my side stood a gipsy girl. She was so handsome! The most beautiful specimen I have ever seen of a race often beautiful in youth.

‘Pray do!’ said I, and I crossed her small palm with silver. ‘Only, pray, give me a sweetheart half as pretty as yourself.’

The girl was, no doubt, used to such compliments, but she blushed as if new to them. She looked me in the face, quickly but searchingly, and then bent her dark eyes over my hand.

‘Chut! chut!’ she said with a sound of sorrowful pity, ‘but you have known sorrows already. You lost your father when you were very young. You have brothers, but no sister. Ah! you have had a sweetheart when you were a mere boy. You will never see her again, never. The line is clean broken off. It cut you to the heart. You nearly died of it. You have conquered, but you’ll never be as gay again.’

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I snatched away my hand in amaze.

'You are indeed a witch!' said I, falteringly.

'Did I offend you? I'll not say any more of what has passed; let me look for your good luck in the time to come.'

'Do so, and say something pleasant. Conceal the bad fortune as much as you can.'

I felt very credulous and superstitious.

'Chut! chut! but that new star thwarts you much.'

'What new star?'

'I don't know what they call it. But it makes men fond of strange studies, and brings about crosses and sorrows that you never think to have.* Still, you are a prosperous gentleman; you will never come to want; you will be much before the world and raise your head high, but I fear you'll not have the honours you count on now. Chut! chut!—pity! pity!—you'll know scandal and slander; you'll be spoken ill of where you least deserve. That will vex you much, but you are proud, and will not stoop to show it. Your best friends and your worst enemies will be women. You'll hunger for love all your life, and you will have much of it; but less satisfaction than sorrow. Chut! chut! how often you will be your own enemy! but don't be down-hearted, there is plenty of good fortune and success in store for you—not like me. Look at my hand. See here, where the cross comes against the line of life!'

'What does that mean?'

'Sorrow—and it is very near!'

'Nay, you don't believe for yourself all that you say to others. Our fortunes are not written in the palm of our hands.'

'For those who can read them—yes,' said the gipsy.

'But very few have the gift. Some can read fortunes by fixing their eyes on anything—the gift comes to them.'

I don't pretend to give the exact words of the girl. They

* The astrologers attribute these effects to Herschell.

were spoken quickly, and often in florid phrases ; but, to the best of my recollection, I repeat the substance. We continued to walk on, and talk ; we became familiar, and she interested me greatly. I questioned her as to the women of her caste, their mode of life, their religion, their origin, their language. Her replies were evasive, and often enigmatical. I remember that she said there were but two genuine clans of gipsies in England, and that the one bore the generic name of Fahey, the other of Smith, from the names their first dukes or leaders bore. She said that many of their traditions as to their origin and belief were dying out—that some of them had become what she called Christians ; though, from her account, it was but a heathen sort of Christianity. She took great pains to convince me that they were not wilful impostors in their belief that they could predict the future. I have since learned that though they placed great faith in the starry influences, their ideas were quite distinct from the astrology known to us. Nor was their way of reading the lines in the hand at all like that described in books of chiromancy.¹

From these subjects we passed on to others more tender and sentimental. The girl seemed to have taken a liking to me, but she was coy and modest.

‘I should much like,’ said I, abruptly, ‘to pass a few days with you and your tribe. Do you think I might?’

The young gipsy’s eyes brightened vividly.

‘That I am sure you can, if you can put up with it—the like of you, a real born gentleman. Grandmother does as she will with the men, and I have my own way with her. Oh, do stay ! Stop—I don’t see that in the lines in my hand—I only see the cross.’

I could not help kissing the little hand. She would not let me kiss the lips, which were pursed up in pretty, wistful doubt.

By-and-by, on a broader patch of the common land, and

[¹ He afterwards studied both astrology and chiromancy ; and seriously.—L.]

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backed by a deeper mass of the woods, I saw before me the gipsy encampment. Just then the sun set. The clouds around it red and purple, the rest of the sky clear and blue, and Venus, the love star, newly risen.

We passed by some ragged, swarthy, children lolling on the grass; they rose up and followed us. Three young men, standing round an older gipsy, who was employed in tinkering, stared at me somewhat fiercely. But the girl took me by the hand and led me into the spacious tent. A woman, apparently of great age, sate bending over a wood fire, on which boiled a huge pot. To this woman my young companion spoke low and eagerly, in a language at which I could not guess my way to a word—the old woman looking hard at me all the time, and shaking her head at first in dissent; but gradually she seemed talked into acquiescence. The dear little gipsy, indeed, seemed to me irresistible; the tones of her voice were so earnest yet so coaxing. At length she turned round to me and said joyfully,—

‘You are welcome to stay as long as you like. But stop—what money have you got about you?’

I felt as if an illusion was gone. It went to my heart to hear the girl refer to money. Was her kindness, then, all sordid? Was I to buy the hospitable rites proffered to me?

I replied very coldly, that I had enough money to pay for any civilities I might receive.

The girl’s face flushed, and her eyes sparkled angrily.

‘You mistake me. I did not think you could. I spoke for your safety. It may be dangerous to have money. Give it all to grandmother’s care. She will return it to you, untouched, when you leave us.’

With an inexpressible feeling of relief and trust, I instantly drew forth all the coins about me (about 14*l.*) and gave it to the old woman, who took what must have seemed to her a large sum without showing any emotion, and slid it into her pocket.

'You don't think I shall let you lose a sixpence?' said the girl, drawing up her stature proudly.

'Oh, no! I wish it were thousands.'

Poor child! At these words the pride vanished; her eyes moistened.

Then the old woman rose and took some embers from the fire, strewed them on the ground, and bade me stand in them. She said something to the girl, who went forth and called in all the other gipsies—men, women, and children. There were about a dozen of them altogether. As soon as they were assembled, the old woman, taking my right hand in hers, and pointing to the embers beneath my feet, began to address them in the gipsy tongue. They all stood listening reverently. When she had finished they bowed their heads, came up to me, and by word and sign made me understand that I was free of the gipsy tent, and welcome to the gipsy cheer.

Resolved to make myself popular, I exerted all my powers to be lively and amusing—hail fellow, well met! The gipsies said little themselves, but they seemed to enjoy my flow of talk and my high spirits. We all sate round the great fire—a primitive Oriental group. By-and-by the pot was taken off, and its contents distributed amongst us; potatoes and bread, fragments of meat stewed to rags, and seasoned with herbs of a taste before unknown to me. Altogether I thought the podrida excellent.

The old crone, who seemed the Queen of the camp, did not, however, partake of this mess. She had a little dish of her own broiled on the embers, of odd, uncouth form. I did not like to be too inquisitive that night, but I learned from my young patroness the next day, that her grandmother was faithful to the customs of the primitive gipsies, and would eat nothing in the shape of animal food that had not died a natural death. Her supper had been a broiled hedgehog found in a trap.

CHAPTER IX.

(Autobiographical.)

HOW IT ENDED. 1824. Æt. 21.

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I SPENT with these swarthy wanderers five or six very happy days, only alloyed by the fear that I should be called on to requite the hospitality I received by participating in some theft upon poultry-yard or drying-ground, that would subject me to the treadmill. Had I been asked, I very much doubt if I should have had the virtue to refuse. However, the temptation, luckily, was never pressed upon me, nor did I witness anything to justify the general suspicion of gipsy errors as to the *meum* and *tuum*. Once only a fine goose, emerging from the pot, inflamed my appetite and disturbed my conscience. The men generally absented themselves from the camp at morning, together with a donkey and their tinkering apparatus, sometimes returning at noon, sometimes not till night.

The women went about fortune-telling; the children watched on the common for any stray passenger whom they might induce to enter the camp and cross with silver the hand of the oracle; for the old woman sate by the fire all day. My young gipsy went forth by herself—also on pretence of telling fortunes; but we had fixed a spot on the road at which I always joined her; and we used then to wander through the green lanes, or sit on some grassy bank, talking to each other with open hearts.

I think that the poor girl felt for me, not exactly love, but

that sort of wild, innocent, fondness a young Indian savage might feel for the first fair face from Europe, that had ever excited her wonder. Once the instinctive greed of her caste seized her at the sight of a young horseman, and she sprang from my side to run after him, not resting till he had stopped his horse, crossed her hand, and heard his fortunes.

When she came back to my side she showed me half-a-crown with such glee! I turned away coldly, and walked off. She stood rooted to the spot for a moment, and then ran after me and threw her arms round my neck.

‘Are you angry?’

‘Angry, no; but to run after that young man——’

‘Jealous? oh, I’m so happy! then you do care for me?’

As if with a sudden impulse, she raised herself on tiptoe, clung to me, and kissed my forehead. I clasped her in my arms; but she glided from them like a serpent, and ran off, back to the encampment, as if afraid of me and of herself.

One morning she was unusually silent and reserved. I asked her, reproachfully, why she was so cold.

‘Tell me,’ she said abruptly,—‘tell me truly, do you love me?’

‘I do indeed.’ And so I thought.

‘Will you marry me, then?’

‘Marry you?’ I cried, aghast. ‘Marry? Alas! I would not deceive you—that is impossible.’

‘I don’t mean,’ cried she impetuously, but not seeming hurt at my refusal, ‘I don’t mean as you mean—marriage according to your fashion. I never thought of that; but marry me as we marry.’

‘How is that?’

‘You will break a piece of burned earth with me—a tile, for instance—into two halves.’

‘Well?’

‘In grandmother’s presence. That will be marriage. It lasts only five years. It is not long,’ she said pleadingly.

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'And if you want to leave me before, how could I stay you?'

Poor dear child! for child after all she was, in years and in mind; how charming she looked then! Alas! I went further for a wife and fared worse.

Two days after this proposition, I lost sight of her for ever.

That evening and the next day I observed, for the first time, that I had excited the ill-will of two out of the three young gipsy men. They answered me when I spoke to them with rudeness and insolence; gave me broad hints that I had stayed long enough, and was in their way.

They followed me when I went out to join my dear Mimy (I don't know her true name, or if she had any—I gave her the name of Mimy), and though I did join her all the same, they did not speak as they passed me, but glared angrily, and seated themselves near us.

The girl went up and spoke to them. I saw that the words on both sides were sharp and high; finally, they rose and slunk away sullenly. The girl refused to tell me what had passed between them; but she remained thoughtful and sad all day.

It was night. I lay in my corner of the encampment, gazing drowsily on the fire. The gipsies had all retired to their nooks and recesses also, save only the old woman, who remained on her stool, cowering over the embers. Presently, I saw Mimy steal across the space, and come to her grandmother's side, lay her head in her lap, and weep bitterly. The old woman evidently tried to console her, not actually speaking, but cooing low, and stroking her black hair with caressing hands. At length they both rose, and went very softly out of the tent. My curiosity was aroused, as well as my compassion. I looked round—all was still. I crept from my corner, and went gently round the tent: everyone seemed fast asleep; some huddled together, some in nooks apart. I stepped forth into the open air. I found Mimy and the old crone seated

under the shadow of the wood, and asked why Mimy wept (she was weeping still). The old woman put her finger to her lips, and bade me follow her through a gap in the hedge into the shelter of the wood itself. Mimy remained still, her face buried in her hands. When we were in the wood, the old woman said to me,—

‘You must leave us. You are in danger!’

‘How?’

‘The young men are jealous of you and the girl; their blood is up. I cannot keep it down. I can do what I like with all—except love and jealousy. You must go.’

‘Nonsense! I can take care of myself against a whole legion of spindle-shanked gipsies; they’ll never dare to attack me; and I don’t mind rude words and angry looks. I’ll not leave Mimy. I cannot——’

‘You must,’ said Mimy, who had silently followed us; and she put her arms fairly and heartily round me. ‘You must go. The stars will have it.’

‘’Tis not for your sake I speak,’ said the old woman, passionately; ‘you had no right to touch her heart. You deserve the gripe and the stab; but if they hurt you, what will the law do to them? I once saw a gipsy hanged—it brought woe on us all! You’ll not break her heart, and ruin us all. Go!’

‘Mimy! Mimy! will you not come too?’

‘She cannot; she is a true-born gipsy. Let her speak for herself.’

‘No, no, I cannot leave my people!’ she whispered. ‘But I will see you again, later. Let me know where to find you. Don’t fret. You’ll have crosses enough without me. I will come to you later; I will indeed!’

She had drawn me away from the old woman while she spoke, and with every word she kissed my hands, leaving there such burning tears.

At length I promised to depart, believing fully in Mimy’s

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promise to return—the promise that we should meet again. I gave her my name and address. She pledged herself to find me out before the winter.

They were both very anxious that I should set off instantly. But my pride revolted at the idea of skulking away from foes that I despised, in the dead of night. I promised to go, but openly and boldly, the next day. I was in some hopes that meanwhile the old woman would talk the jealous rivals into good behaviour. She assured me she would try. I told her to give them all my money, if they would but let me stay in peace for a week or two longer. She nodded her head, and went back with Mimy into the tent. I remained without for an hour or so, sad and angry, then I crept back to my corner. The fire was nearly out—all around was dark. I fell into an uneasy, haunted sleep, and did not wake till an hour later than usual. When I did so, all were assembled round the tent, and, as I got up, the three young men came to me and shook hands, their faces very friendly. I thought they had taken the bribe, and were going to bid me stay. No.

‘You leave us!’ said the tallest of the three. ‘And we stay at home to accompany you part of the way, and wish you speed and luck.’

I turned round. No Mimy was there. Only the old woman, who set before me my breakfast.

I could not touch food. I remained silent a few minutes, then whispered to the crone. ‘Shall I not even see her again?’

‘Hush!’ she said, ‘leave her to take care of that.’

I took up my knapsack sulkily enough, and was going forth, when the old woman drew aside and slipped my money into my hand.

‘But you must take some.’

‘Not a penny. Mimy would never forgive it. Off, and away! There will be storm before noon. Go with light heart. Success is on your forehead!’

The prediction did not cheer me, nor did the talk of the gipsies who gathered round me, and went with me in grand procession to the end of the common; which I suppose, they considered their dominion. There they formally took leave of me. I might have gone some three miles, when the boughs of a tree overhanging the neighbouring wood were put aside, and Mimy's dark eyes looked cautiously forth. Presently she was by my side. She only stood a minute, holding me tightly in her arms, and looking me in the eyes, then drawing back her hand and kissing fondly my face and my hands—my very garments. At last she sprang away, and, pointing with her forefinger to her open palm, said, 'This is the sorrow foretold to me. See, it begins so soon, and goes on to the end of life!'

'No, no, Mimy! you have promised we shall meet again.'

'Ha, ha! a gipsy's promise!' cried Mimy, between a laugh and a screech.

She darted back into the wood. I followed her, but in vain. From that day to this I have never seen, never heard of, her. I have sought gipsies, to inquire after her fate; but one told me one thing, one another. I know it not. Probably she was consoled sooner than my vain young heart supposed, and broke the tile with one of her kin. How, even if we met again, should I ever recognise her? Gipsy beauty fades so soon—fades like all illusion, and all romance!

CHAPTER X.

(Autobiographical.)

LADY CAROLINE LAMB. 1824. Æt. 21.

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I RESUMED my wanderings, still on foot, and meeting with no adventures worth recording, till at last I took my place in a stage coach starting from one of the northern towns, and arrived in London, on my way to join my mother at Broadstairs. While in London my eye was caught by the singular beauty of an Andalusian jennet for sale. The price was not high, but far exceeded the money I had about me; however, I had the courage to ask my mother's banker to advance it, which he kindly did; and I rode my new purchase down to Broadstairs. I mention this incident, because I have formed few friendships among my fellow-men so intimate and so enduring as I formed with this black-maned Andalusian. It lasted me for more than twenty years, and died then, not of old age, but of an inflammatory disorder, preserving its beauty and spirit to the last. It was small, but of that Arab form and constitution which can go extraordinary distances without evincing fatigue. I have ridden it above seventy miles a day, and the next morning it was equally fresh and full of fire. I never found another horse which I had the same pleasure in riding, and, indeed, I have cared little to ride at all since its loss.¹

The life at watering-places was much more gay and

[¹ He rode it all the way (on the journey subsequently mentioned) from Paris to Dieppe; and it is the subject of an ode in *Weeds and Wildflowers*.—L.]

sociable at that time than it is now. At the little village of Broadstairs, which affected select gentility, the Assembly Rooms formed a place of general reunion. They were open every evening for cards and conversaziones, and two or three times a week for dancing. Nor was dancing itself at that day the listless operation it is now. To combine spirit with dignity, was an art of movement that held high rank among the accomplishments of young men. The best male dancer of my day was the present¹ Lord Hertford; the next best was a Mr. Reynolds. The style of dress worn of an evening by gentlemen contributed, perhaps, to forbid slovenliness of step and maintain a certain stateliness and grace. Tight pantaloons or kneebreeches with the *chapeau bras* (the same dress still worn at Court as evening undress) was then almost universal; and a fine shape, with correspondent elegance of movement, was more admired than even a handsome face. Fast talk and slang came in with trowsers and turned-down collars.

I enjoyed the quiet gaieties of this little watering-place, with its innocent flirtations—as was natural to my youth; and the companionship of my mother sufficed for all graver interest. She was at that time more thoughtful and melancholy than usual, and her reflections found vent in verse and prose tinged with deep religious sentiment.

On quitting Broadstairs, I was under an engagement to pass a week or so with Lady Caroline Lamb at Bocket, before returning to Cambridge. My acquaintance with this singular woman had commenced in my childhood. Some poor man had got injured in a crowd, and, with the impulsive benevolence that belonged to her, she had had him placed in her carriage and took him to his home. Knebworth and Bocket are but a few miles distant from each other. The story reached and touched me. I wrote some childish verses on it and sent them to her. She was pleased; wrote to my mother, begging

[¹ Now the late.—L.]

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her to bring me over to Bocket; and, when I came, took a fancy to me, and even painted my portrait—as a child seated on a rock in the midst of the sea, with the motto under it, ‘*Seul sur la terre.*’ From that time to the date at which my record has arrived I had seen little of her, beyond a visit for a day or so, once or twice a year.

The more familiar intimacy that commenced with the visit I now made to Bocket was destined to have a marked effect on my future life.

Lady Caroline Lamb was then between thirty and forty, but looked much younger than she was; thanks, perhaps, to a slight rounded figure and a childlike mode of wearing her hair (which was of a pale golden colour) in close curls. She had large hazel eyes, capable of much varied expression, exceedingly good teeth, a pleasant laugh, and a musical intonation of voice, despite a certain artificial drawl, habitual to what was called the Devonshire House Set. Apart from these gifts, she might be considered plain. But she had, to a surpassing degree, the attribute of charm, and never failed to please if she chose to do so. Her powers of conversation were remarkable. In one of Lord Byron’s letters to her, which she showed me, he said, ‘You are the only woman I know who never bored me.’

There was, indeed, a wild originality in her talk, combining great and sudden contrasts, from deep pathos to infantine drollery: now sentimental, now shrewd, it sparkled with anecdotes of the great world, and of the eminent persons with whom she had been brought up, or been familiarly intimate; and, ten minutes after, it became gravely eloquent with religious enthusiasm, or shot off into metaphysical speculations—sometimes absurd, sometimes profound—generally suggestive and interesting. A creature of caprice, and impulse, and whim, her manner, her talk, and her character shifted their colours as rapidly as those of a chameleon. She has sent her page the round of her guests at three o’clock in the morning, with a message that she was playing the organ that stood in the

staircase at Brocket, and begged the favour of their company to hear her. Strange to say, it was a summons generally obeyed, and those who obeyed did not regret the loss of their sleep; for, when the audience had assembled, she soon relinquished the solemn keys of the organ, and her talk would be so brilliant and amusing, that the dawn found one still listening, spell-bound, without a thought of bed.

She interested me chiefly, however, by her recollections and graphic descriptions of Byron; with whom her intimacy had lasted during the three most brilliant years of his life in England, and whom, when they had fiercely quarrelled, she had depicted in a wild romance, 'Glenarvon,' as a beautiful monster—half demon, and yet demigod. He never forgave it, though he ought to have been flattered, for it represented him very much as, during the zenith of his social fashion, he had wished the female part of the world to believe him. At the time I now speak of, there was no bitterness in her talk of him, and whatever faults she found in his character, she fired up in his defence if anyone else abused him. Of the hideous calumnies concerning himself and Mrs. Leigh (indeed, of all calumnies involving the charge of crime) she certainly acquitted him. She thought, with most others who knew him well, that from an affectation of *rouerie*—which was by no means uncommon with the fine gentlemen of that day, especially if they belonged to the political creed of the Mirabeaus and Foxes—he had pleasure in shocking people, and making himself out worse than he was. She was no mean judge of human character; and, viewing Byron then from a point of view no longer obscured by the passions, I think her estimate of him was sound—as a being somewhat akin to herself in strange caprices and wild affectations—spoiled by too early a reputation for other things besides genius—but, on the whole, with many redeeming qualities, lovable and noble. And I am bound to add that, in his letters to her, despite the evident passion that dictated and coloured them, there was no trace

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of the selfish and heartless libertine; rather a desire to save her, as it were, from herself, and a consideration for her happiness chastening and predominating over the thought of his own. Whatever the connection between them, and however blameable, regarded from the mildest point of view, I cannot think him the seducing party; and certainly, from her own confession, he was not the betraying one.

During the few days I stayed at Bocket, a very intimate friendship grew up between this singular woman and myself. We corresponded regularly on my return to Cambridge; and in our correspondence there was a great deal of sentiment and romance which looked like love, but it never came to that. Indeed, it was not many months before this correspondence was brought to a close, and any feeling beyond the interest which a clever woman, with time heavy on her hands, and systematically (though perhaps not always consciously) a coquette, might have conceived for a youth of some promise, was absorbed in a livelier sentiment for another.

I was invited to come from Cambridge to join a party assembled at Bocket for the purpose of going to a ball given at Panshanger. I arrived, and before the evening was over I saw that I was supplanted. A singularly handsome man, in the prime of life, Mr. Russell, a natural son of the Duke of Bedford, was among the guests. I had wit enough to see that Lady Caroline and this gentleman were captivated with each other. The next morning I had a private conversation with the lady, which ended in my bidding her farewell; and, feeling too severely wounded (rather, perhaps, in pride or vanity than in heart) for an immediate return to the University, I went straight to Brighton, where I knew I should find a college friend whose conversation was the antidote of all morbid sentiment.

Frederick Villiers was a natural son of a gentleman of ancient birth by a young lady of rank, whom he had seduced when on a visit at the Duchess of D.'s. He was pledged to

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marry her, but broke the pledge, and died later of an accident in hunting. Two sons, of whom Frederick was the younger, were the issue of this unhappy *liaison*. The secret of their birth was carefully kept by the families concerned. The sons were sent, under the name of Villiers, to Eton. On leaving that school the elder was put into the army, and went to India with his regiment; the younger was destined for the diplomacy, and sent abroad to learn foreign languages. But the death of a Minister, who was a friend of the mother's family, destroying the hope of advancement in the diplomatic career, Frederick was recalled from the Continent, and placed as a fellow-commoner at Trinity College, Cambridge, with a view to his ultimately adopting the profession of the Bar.

He was somewhat older than the generality of freshmen, and his premature experience of life in foreign capitals, conjoined with a familiar acquisition of modern languages, and a wonderful raciness of humour in his conversation, here obtained for him at once a kind of social ascendancy amongst his contemporaries, and a ready admission into our 'set;' which was composed of the *élite* of the young men likely to make some figure in future life. This young man, however, if he flashed on us as a meteor, vanished from us as a meteor, and was now amusing himself at Brighton, leaving it doubtful whether he should return to Cambridge or not.

I joined him in his lodgings, and his high animal spirits, and the gay, worldly philosophy of his talk, soon effaced from my mind the pangs I had felt at the resignation of my Platonic romance. I returned to the University in a healthier and manlier mood than that in which I had quitted it.

[A memorandum dated 1869, attached to the letters of Mr. Frederick Villiers, who had then taken his father's name of Meynell, gives some further particulars of him:—

'He created a sensation amongst us at Cambridge. Was very witty and amusing. Went to the Bar. Took good rooms in

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Lincoln's Inn Fields, where he kept a man cook as clerk. Got into Parliament; first for a close Borough, then for Canterbury. Lost the last seat on a charge, I think, of treating. Obtaining some money through an aunt, Lady A., and his mother, he invested it at fifteen per cent. in loans to the Duke of Buckingham, and went to live at Naples on the interest. There he flourished for some time in high fashion. The sudden crash of the Duke of Buckingham ruined him. Found a wife with some money. Ultimately got a sinecure in the gift of Cockburn. Well off at this date (1869). An extraordinary man, with much natural ability. Shrewd, and a keen observer. A good linguist, a logical arguer. Would have done well at the Bar or in Parliament, had he not wanted industry and motive power. The least ambitious man of talent I ever met. Singularly fearless in youth. I have been his second in two duels; and he fought many more, with as much *sang froid* as if he were playing billiards. Much of my idea of Pelham was taken from him. He is now becoming rather a bore. Never having refreshed his mind with new ideas, he repeats the old ones. His intellect has run to seed. Notwithstanding his cynical philosophy, he is warm-hearted and affectionate. A most indulgent father, a kind husband, and altogether a good man, despite errors and defects.']

CHAPTER XI.

*(Supplementary and Illustrative.)*LADY CAROLINE LAMB. 1825. *Æt.* 22.

[THE character of Lady Caroline Lamb in the Autobiography presents her in an aspect less absurd than the portrait given of her by critics and commentators who had never witnessed the charm of that amusing, impulsive, and capriciously kind-hearted woman. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that her ardent attachments were directed by a wayward excitement which not unfrequently passed the limits of sanity. She delighted to bring men to her feet, and when she had succeeded in entralling them, she commonly hastened to pass on to fresh conquests. She exerted her fascinations on my father, then but a college youth. He was flattered that she should select him for the object of her attentions; and it was on his vanity, as he confesses, that her fitful fondness took effect. His heart at that time was thirsting for sympathy. It came in a form inconsistent with the sacred memories treasured up in the depths of his nature. But, exhausted by the prolonged strain of torturing emotions, he accepted the relief he would not have sought, and gave himself up for the hour to the intoxicating sense of a passion he seemed to have inspired. No one passes through experiences of this description without a certain deterioration of sentiment and feeling. Encouraged only to be repulsed, the mockery, the wounded self-esteem, has a hardening influence, increased by the nature of an affection which sullies the pure unadulterated conceptions of refined, generous, spotless love.]

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Shortly after my father withdrew to Brighton in 1825, smarting under the mortification of Lady Caroline's neglect, he narrated the history of his brief reign and discomfiture in a letter to an intimate friend. From this letter I transcribe here all that relates to Lady Caroline.

I believe (says the writer of it) that what I had felt for her had its origin rather in gratified vanity than in anything else. On both sides this feeling had little to do with the heart, but a great deal to do with the imagination. When she supposed herself dying she sent for me; and there was nothing theatrical in this. The doctors told me there was everything to apprehend. I sat by her bedside for hours; and, if ever counterfeit tenderness seemed real, hers did. When I left her she wrote me a few words, though expressly forbidden by the doctors to do so. Well, when she was recovered I went to her. It was on Christmas day. She was kind and affectionate. But still, there was a coldness in her manner. She explained it to me by saying that she felt she acted wrong in loving me, and that she was endeavouring to overcome it. She wished I should be like her son, the dearest of her friends, but not her lover. She talks sentiment exceedingly well, and with singular grace. Of course she talked me over. I left her, half pleased, half piqued,¹ in doubt and anxiety and more in love with her than ever. When I went back, for Lady Cowper's ball, the house was full of company. I arrived at three or four in the afternoon. She never sent for me, nor saw me till we met at dinner. She then avoided speaking to me; did not let me accompany her to the ball in her carriage, but took with her Mr. Russell, a fashionable beau, extremely handsome, but dull, insipid, and silly. I was not then jealous of him; for I was conscious of my own superiority to him in everything but good looks. But I imagined (for, like most women, she is fond of coquetry) that she was only trying to make me jealous. At the ball, she took his arm, walked about the room with him, and never spoke to me till the end of the evening. I was very angry and very sarcastic when she did speak to me. I said to her, when we were all going to bed, 'I go to-morrow, before you are up. Good-bye.' She sent to my room a short note about 9 o'clock the next morning;

[¹ An old story. So Madame de Maintenon, in the commencement of her relations with Louis XIV., used to dismiss his Majesty '*toujours triste, jamais déçu.*' In these situations youth and age are alike.—L.]

implored me not to go till I had seen her. I went to her room. She entreated me to forgive her, threw her arms about me, and cried. Of course she persuaded me to stay. We rode out. R. went with us. Although she certainly did not try to make me jealous, I soon saw that she felt for him that love of the imagination which she had felt before for me. She could not help liking me still, in an affectionate way; but he was the idol of the moment. I was miserable. I left her before she got home, and repaired to my room. You know my stormy paroxysms when I am violently affected. I was in one of these when she came into my room. She implored me not to give way to my passions, and not to be deceived. I said to her 'I will believe you, and be happy, if you will only say that I have no reason to be jealous of Mr. R. Say this, and I will never again insult you by being so.' She would not answer me. She said that she had known Mr. R. for a very long time, and had once felt a love for him, but not the sort of love she felt for me. I was, she said, in all respects more worthy of her affections. I went downstairs. Russell sat opposite me. He wore a ring. It was one which Lord Byron had given Lady Caroline: one which was only to be worn by those she loved. I had often worn it myself. She had wanted me to accept it, but I would not; because it was so costly. And now *he* wore it. Can you conceive my resentment, my wretchedness? After dinner, I threw myself upon the sofa. Music was playing. Lady Caroline came to me. 'Are you mad?' said she. I looked up. The tears stood in my eyes. I could not have spoken a word for the world. What do you think she said aloud? 'Don't play this melancholy air. It affects Mr. Bulwer so that he is actually weeping.' My tears, my softness, my *love*, were over in a moment. I sprang up, laughed, talked, and was the life of the company. But when we broke up for the evening I went to her, and said, 'Farewell for ever. It is over. Now I see you in your true light. Vain and heartless, you have only trifled with my feelings in order to betray me. I despise as well as leave you. Instead of jealousy, I only feel contempt. Farewell. Go, and be happy.' I left Brocket the next morning, very early, was here the same night, and in a fever the next; lost twenty ounces of blood; but have taken your advice, and am endeavouring to forget what I have no wish to remember. My spirits are already much better; but, at times, I feel a distress so acute that I am forced by it to run out anywhere, and do anything to be rid of it. Still, daily I feel more and more myself. My feeling was chiefly

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the creature of vanity and imagination; and such feelings, when the vanity has been wounded, and the imagination checked, are soon over. What I feel now is a sort of aversion. I wish it were indifference, but that will soon be, I hope. I am not dissipated. There is fortunately for me an old friend here. A very amusing clever man who has travelled to every country in Europe; and I see a great deal of him. Lamb, by the by, was particularly kind to me. I think he saw my feelings. His is a singularly fine character for a man of the world.

The time soon came when the adventure could be recalled without a pang or a sigh, or any other sentiment than the amused interest of a student of the heart. Already he had begun the vocation in which his business was to depict and analyse sentiment; and his recent experience supplied the material for one of his earliest attempts in fiction.]

CHAPTER XII.

(Supplementary and Illustrative.)

'DE LINDSAY.' 1825. ÆT. 22.

[THE tale in which Lady Caroline figures under a fictitious guise, was very crude and morbid, but not without a certain gloomy power. It was written not long after the Brighton letter, and entitled 'De Lindsay.' It belongs to the author's Byronic period; when, in obedience to the law which governs immature genius, he was working his way through a measure of imitation into marked originality. The idea or sentiment of the whole is sufficiently indicated by the motto prefixed to it: 'Man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain.' The narrative opens with the observation that

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There is one feeling which is the earliest born in us, which accompanies us throughout life, and of which there is scarcely one among us who can say 'It has been realised according to my desire.' This feeling is the wish to be loved: loved to the full height and depth and fervour of the sentiment we imagine ourselves capable of embodying in a single passion. Who that has nicely weighed his own heart will not confess that he has never been entirely satisfied with the love given to him by the friend of his boyhood, the mistress of his youth, or the children of his age? And yet while we reproach the affection bestowed on us for its languor or its weakness, we ourselves are open to the same charge. It would seem as if we all possessed within us certain immortal spiritual tendencies to love, which nothing human or earthborn can wholly excite, or wholly satisfy. These are the instincts which make us conscious of a power never to be exercised, a want never

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to be appeased ; and with them we move through life mourning, resenting, or seeking to forget, the irremediable loss of a felicity never possessed.

The hero of the story, Rupert de Lindsay, is then introduced as

a man in whom this craving for a love beyond the ordinary loves of earth was so powerful and restless a passion, that it became in him the source of all the errors and vices which have usually their origin in the gross licence of the senses.

He is an orphan

of ancient family, and considerable possessions ; with a person that could advance but slight pretension to attract, yet with an eager desire to please, and a taste the most delicate and refined. He had early learnt the art to compensate by the graces of manner for the deficiencies of form. But Marmontel's exquisite tale of Alcibiades was applicable to him. He was loved for his adventitious qualities, not for himself. And he knew it. One loved his fashion, another his fortune. A third listened to him out of pique at some one else ; a fourth because she wished to decoy him from her friend. These adventures and discoveries brought to him disgust. They brought to him also, however, knowledge of the world ; and nothing hardens the heart more than that knowledge of the world which is founded on a knowledge of its vices, made bitter by disappointment and suspicious by deceit. I saw him (says the narrator) just before he left England, and his mind was then sore and feverish. I saw him again on his return, after an absence of five years, and it was then callous and even. He had now reduced to a system the art of governing his own passions, and influencing those of others. He had reached the second stage of experience when the deceived become the deceivers. To his indignation at the vices of human nature he added scorn for its weakness. Still, however, many good though irregular impulses lingered about his heart ; and still the appeal, which if addressed to a principle would have been fruitless, could find him responsive when it was made to an affection. Few men of ability who neither marry nor desire to marry, live much among the frivolities of the world after the age of twenty-eight : and De Lindsay, now near his thirtieth year, avoided the society he had once courted. He lived solely to satisfy his pleasures

and to indulge his indolence. Women were his only pursuit, and to succeed in that pursuit was his only ambition.

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The story then records some early incidents in the life of its hero, which serve to explain the gradual malformation of the character thus described. But there is only one of these descriptions which has any claim to resuscitation here. It is strictly autobiographical, as will be seen.

On the banks of Windermere, in the midst of that rich, half-southern scenery, which combines all the charms of wood and water, sky and mountain, Rupert regained for a while much of the purity of his boyhood. His occupations here were calm and thoughtful. The restless wanderings of the rivulet soothed him from their very resemblance to the temper of his own mind. He began to feel that it was not the departure but the revolt of youth, not the triumph of his worse, but the continued struggle of his better, nature which had put him on such bitter terms with himself and the world around him. In his lonely boat upon the still blue waters of that romantic lake he poured forth to the midnight skies the sadness of a spirit dissatisfied with itself, and still capable, perhaps, of the happiness it sought, had the search been less self-conscious, less premeditated, less misguided. But in Rupert de Lindsay there was no fixed principle, no root of steady purpose beyond the gratification of his own sensations. He was not exactly a sensualist, but he had become the sybarite of an imaginative selfishness.

In his boyish days Rupert had formed a visionary childish attachment to a person of singular talent and still more singular character, who lived in the neighbourhood of his own estate. His mind was not unresponsive to the charm of virtue, though, from its susceptibility to excitement, it was easily fascinated by vice. He had been, in these boyish days, enchanted by some traits of benevolence in the conduct of Lady Melton. She exercised her benevolence in a manner somewhat eccentric, but the eccentricity gave to it a novelty and curious grace. The boy had expressed in some verses, after the fashion of Lord Thurlow, the feelings excited in him by the exhibition of this peculiarity in Lady Melton's character; and, with the timid vanity of fifteen, he sent them to the lady of his lyre. The lady was not displeased with the offering, humble as it was; and from that moment there had existed between them a friendship,

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animated on Rupert's part by a certain romantic feeling, which was no unlikely parent to love. Early circumstances had thrown a tinge of melancholy over the life and habits of Lady Melton. She went little into that mixed and general society in which De Lindsay had lately moved, and it was more than a year since he had seen her.

Before he left London, however, he had written to her, requesting some trifling favour; and her answer (full of the kindest and most flattering expressions) had reached him at the Lakes.

'Lady Melton,' said Rupert, 'is exactly the woman I could love, and whose love would be a delightful combination of those graces of mind and heart which I have never yet found in another.' He wrote to her a long letter, obscurely hinting at his attachment, and suggesting thoughts well calculated to attract a woman of sentiment and genius. He was delighted, though not surprised, by the answer, from which he could draw no unfavourable augury. Letter produced letter; and, during his stay at the Lakes, the correspondence became regular on either side, getting gradually more tender on the part of the gentleman, and less reserved on the side of the lady.

When Rupert returned to his own county, he received from his fair correspondent a pressing invitation to spend a few days with her at Melton Park. It was accepted with delight. Lady Melton was less beautiful than any of his previous loves; but her large languishing eye, a lip which eloquently aided the magic of her glance, an exceedingly musical voice, and a form in whose delicate and fairy-like proportions a Phidias could have found no fault, invested her with a pervading undefinable charm, far more attractive to Rupert than the inanimate perfection of Lady Stanmore, or the sensual luxuriance of Mrs. Danvers Mountjoy.

Sir Henry Melton, the husband of this lady, was a man of rare intellectual powers and attainments, which he combined with a singular joyousness of disposition, and the irresistible charm of a thoroughly large, fine, and frank nature, careless in the nobility of its character, and noble in the carelessness of its expression.¹

The union of this couple had been, on both sides, a marriage of affection, but twelve years of it had left on each side little of the bridal tenderness remaining. Lady Melton, like most women of genius, was ever under the influence of her imagination. In a husband, however handsome, clever, and admirable, to whom she had

[¹ The likeness of this portrait to William Lamb is obvious.—L.]

been married twelve years, she found little left to excite this feverish propensity of her mind, and there was much to excite it in a youth who possessed the intellect of a man with more than the ordinary romance and sentiment of a boy.

To De Lindsay, therefore, the imagination of Lady Melton soon became violently attracted. Nor was he backward in returning the feelings with which she seemed to regard him. In the absence of Sir Henry, who was from home, there were only two or three intimate friends at Melton Park. They were too intimate, or too indifferent, to pay much attention to the manner in which their singular hostess whiled away her time. If one less good-natured than the rest referred to it, the others invariably replied, 'Oh it is only her way.' Truly it is a fine thing to have the reputation of eccentricity.

As yet there had been many hints on both sides, but no actual disclosure upon either side, of the sentiment which had grown up between Lady Melton and her young guest. Matters, however, were fast approaching their crisis. Every morning fresh flowers were on Rupert's toilet-table. Every evening a note to him from Lady Melton glowed with the language of that vivid imagination, which Rupert, in his ignorance, mistook for the language of the heart.

It happened one evening that the small party at Melton Park were engaged upon that homely game in which whispering is a necessary ceremony. When it came to the turn of Lady Melton to whisper into the ear of Rupert, a faint kiss accompanied the warm and thrilling breath which left his cheek on fire. The next morning, instead of the customary flowers, he received from her a note. It spoke of regret, shame, passion. 'All levity,' it said, 'even all happiness, is gone. Leave me, my beautiful and still beloved friend. Leave me again to the misery of my solitude.'

Fie on it! this was a note of the Imagination. I have said that Lady Melton had no heart in her love. Rupert did not think so. He demanded to see her. She received him. He fell at her feet. He spoke of his passion: and sweet, from those sweet lips, was the acknowledgment he received in return.

And so he stayed at Melton Park. Day followed day, and still Rupert lingered. He loved, he was intoxicated, and he was happy. But never was the situation of a lover more singular in its character than his. He rode, he walked, he sate with his mistress. He was a privileged visitor to the secrecy of her boudoir: he was alone with her at all hours; he held her in his arms, and covered her

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with his kisses ; he looked into the language of her eyes, and felt the heave of her bosom : and (tell it not in Gath !) this was all.

What an illustration of the motto *Beaucoup de bruit, peu de fruit* ! How it thus happened is a question which Rupert himself could not have answered. He only knew that whenever he assumed what seemed to be the natural privilege of his position, the lady fell on her knees, acknowledged the depth of her passion, declared that she should be miserable for ever if she yielded to it, implored him not to forget this even though she might forget it herself : and, in short, played her part to such perfection that Rupert, who (like all lovers of the orthodox stamp) loved with rather more tenderness than passion, yielded to her persuasions, and forewent the chance of to-day in the confident hope of to-morrow.

That morrow never came, however. De Lindsay was summoned away to attend the deathbed of a female relation. What a scene when the lovers parted ! What vows, what promises of constant correspondence, what overflowings of heart on the side of the hero, and of imagination on that of the heroine !

Throughout the wearisome confinement to which Rupert was now for many weeks condemned, not a day passed without the brightening consolation of a long letter from his Aspasia. And those letters, how brilliant they were in their wit, how glowing in their tenderness ; and in each, how intellectual, how *imaginative* !

Old people, however tough, cannot exist for ever. Rupert's relation died at last. He had attended her with unrelaxing care. He even lamented her death with a grief quite sincere in its vehemence, for two days ; though she did not leave him a farthing, and had been more peevish and disagreeable than she would have had any right to be if she had left him thousands. When the days of mourning were over, he returned to Melton. He was received with all the former kindness ; but at moments there was a wandering coldness in Lady Melton's manner, which he was unable to account for. He was soon to be enlightened, however, as to the cause of it. The flowers no longer bloomed as before upon his table every morning ; and with the flowers the first fragrance of love had departed. The evenings brought him no sweet writings breathing of perfume and passion. All loves of the imagination are short-lived. Lady Melton's was already on the wane. Sad and disappointed, Rupert again left her. He had some business to settle at his own place. He promised to return in a fortnight. He wrote to her

the day after his departure a letter, so warm and devoted that it produced a momentary effect. The reply to it was as passionate as in the early days of Lady Melton's affection for him. 'I was too inattentive, too gloomy,' thought he; 'when next we meet, I will exert all my powers of entertainment, and put forth all the eloquence of my love.' And at the end of the fortnight, he returned to Melton.

There was a ball that night in the neighbourhood. A large party had assembled at Melton to attend it. Rupert did not see Lady Melton before dinner. The carriages were at the door when he entered the drawing-room. 'I shall go with her,' he thought. But no: she had made a different arrangement. He went to the ball with a gouty General, an elderly Parson, and a little girl. Lady Melton was handed to her carriage by Sir Frederick Summers, a man celebrated for the cut of his coat and the beauty of his person. Upon Sir Frederick's arm she entered the ball-room. To Sir Frederick's words, for the rest of the evening, she listened, and on Sir Frederick's looks she fed her own. For the first time the vain and haughty Rupert felt the humiliation of witnessing the triumph of a successful rival. How he longed for some unlucky squire to tread upon his foot! He would have given worlds for an affront to punish. It is so provoking to be in a passion, and to have at hand nobody on whom to vent it. All things, however, have an end: even the duration of balls at which one is horribly bored. That night was to Rupert de Lindsay a night of moral storm and darkness. The passions which slumbered in his indolent nature had been violently roused. He rose at dawn, travelled all day and all the following night, without rest or food, till he found himself upon a narrow bed in the inn of a small country town, with a raging fever. The loss of thirty ounces of blood cured alike the fever and the passion which had caused it. And so ended Rupert's fifth amour. The lady might have held her young lover for ever, had she wished it, in a chain of iron: but it was the freedom of her own fancy, rather than the fidelity of his devotion, that she cared to retain. And in this she did well, if it be well to follow the law of one's own nature. For to her, affection was no sufficient or enduring source of happiness: and if she did not find happiness in the variety and enthusiasm of her brief attachments, at least she would have found it nowhere else. Kind, generous, and richly gifted, graceful alike in every motion of her form and every impulse of her mind, Lady Melton was drawn into all the errors and

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all the misfortunes of her life (of the latter, indeed, at a later period of her life she had many from which Rupert, had he lived, would perhaps have suffered much to save her) by that brilliant but betraying imagination which to a woman is the most dangerous, and yet the most delightful, gift.

Years passed away. They were passed by Rupert in pursuits as vague, variable, and aimless as those of his earliest youth. He went abroad, settling nowhere, and everywhere unstable in his humour, unsatisfied in the indulgence of his wasted desires. At one time he lived as a solitary 'poring on the brook that babbled by;' at another he was the gayest reveller at some dissipated Court; now plunging into wild excesses, now toiling at intellectual labour which had no definite or useful purpose; the master spirit of those who surrounded him, but still the subservient slave of his own unregulated passions. At length he returned to England with a person improved, an intellect developed, a heart corrupted. Latterly his life had been passed in that kind of licentiousness which is, of all, the most vitiating and the most alluring. Refined in his amours, as in all his tastes and pleasures, he had been in turn the deceived and the deceiver, and had learned from each experience to think ill of human nature, to ridicule virtue, to find no meanness in treachery, and to recognise no evil in sin. Yet, amidst all the pleasures and passions which had hardened his heart and debased his nature, he still sighed, as he had sighed at fifteen, for the love he had never found: a love pure, yet passionate, intense, yet enduring, a love virginal, vivid, transcending affection and transfiguring desire. Such a love he had perhaps become more capable of inspiring, from all the evil accomplishments which had rendered him less worthy to possess it. Such a love had been the dream of his ardent boyhood: it was still the vision of his aimless manhood. A voluptuary in habit, a cynic in principle, an adept in that sinister skill which reduces sentiment to a science, in recesses of his nature unpenetrated by the vices of his life he still cherished a passionate wish for such a love: and the time now came when that wish was destined to receive fulfilment.

In a small village not far from London there dwelt a family of the name of Warner. The father, piously christened Ebenezer Ephraim, was a merchant, a bigot, and a saint. The brother, more simply named James, was a rake, a boxer, and a good fellow. But she, the daughter, who bore the chaste sweet name of Mary, what *man* is good enough to describe her? Simple, modest, beautiful in form, more beautiful in heart, of a temper tender rather than gay,

saddened by the gloom which hung about the home of her childhood, yet softened by a serene charity of soul which took from its own sadness only a tenderer sympathy for others; ignorant of sin even in thought; loving all things with an innocent love that even sweetened and beautified what in that poor narrow life of hers was neither beautiful nor sweet,—Mary Warner moved among her coarse and sullen kindred, an unthanked sanctifying presence, lovely and fair as Faith's white image passing over thorns upon its earthly pilgrimage to heaven.

In the adjustment of a passing amour with the wife of an officer in the — Regiment (who, then absent in Ireland, had left his not disconsolate spouse to wear the willow in the village of T.), Rupert first met Mary Warner. Chance favoured him. He entered one day the cottage of a poor man whose wants had been relieved by his inconsistent charity. He found Miss Warner there, employed in the same charitable office. The opportunity was not neglected. He addressed her, accompanied her to the door of her home, used every art to please a young unawakened heart, and in that object he succeeded. Unfortunately for Mary, she had no one among her relations capable of guiding her conduct or winning her confidence. Her father was absorbed in the occupations of his trade and the visions of his creed. The repellent austerity of his manner, which belied the real warmth of his affections, unfitted him to replace the care of the anxious and tender mother whom Mary had lost in infancy. Nor was that loss repaired by anything in the coarser habits and harsher nature of the fraternal rake, boxer, and good-fellow. Thus in that gentle trustful heart those who should have developed, had repressed, the warmth of its natural affections. Mary's nature was a loving one, and found in everything some claim upon the tenderness which no discouragement could permanently check, and no restraint entirely conceal. But there was a vast treasure of tenderness as yet ungiven to others, unguessed even by herself, beneath the quiet surface of that shrinking modest character. It is not surprising, therefore, that De Lindsay, who possessed every fascination of manner that the gifts of experience can add to those of nature, and who devoted them all with consummate skill to the employment of the strongest and deepest passion he had ever felt, should so soon have acquired a dangerous sway over the movements of a heart too innocent for suspicion, when for the first time it experienced the inexpressible luxury of being loved. In all her daily walks, which had hitherto been lonely ones, Rupert

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contrived to join her; and in his tone towards her there was an inarticulate supplication, a respectful tenderness, she felt no inclination, and knew no reason, to rebuff. Mary had in her no great supply of what is called dignity; and even of girlish innocent coquetry she had none. Firmness, courage, and endurance, to suffer, were hers in a high degree. But she was wholly without the Eve-born instincts which prompt or reconcile a woman to the infliction of suffering. At first, some vague confused fear of impropriety in this companionship had mingled, in a faint indefinite way, with the distinct indubitable happiness it brought her. But from the peculiar nature of her education, she was unable to trace this hovering shadow to any substantial intelligible cause. If her thought followed it, it seemed to fade away in the clear consciousness of an innocent delight. Nor could she find in the simplicity of her experience any motive, and still less any means, to repel addresses so humble, so diffident, or resist a voice which only spoke to her in music. It is needless to trace the details of a process so simple. Mary at last awakened to the full knowledge of her own heart; and Rupert felt, for the first time in his life, that he was loved as he desired.

'Never,' said he, 'will I betray this affection: she has trusted in me, and she shall not be deceived. Innocent and happy, she has given me all I care for in this world. Misery and guilt she shall never learn from me.' Thus her innocence was reflected even from the soiled mirror of a soul on which life had cast no images that pass away without leaving some stain behind them; and Rupert's heart was purified while it breathed in the atmosphere of hers. So weeks passed away, until De Lindsay was suddenly recalled by urgent business to his estate. He spoke to Mary of his departure, and her quivering lip and tearful eye were to him ineffable delights. Yet when he pressed her to his heart, her innocence of guilt was her protection from it. In the chronicle of all his sins (and they were many) may this be remembered in mitigation of the unknown sentence which no earthly judge can now revoke.

Day went by after day upon its unreturning course into Eternity. Every morning came the same gentle tap at the post-office window in the little village: every morning the same light step returned gaily homeward through the meadows: every morning the same soft eyes, suffused with happy tears, sparkled over treasured lines the heart so faithfully recorded. Every morning of the week but one. For Monday was a day which could bring no letter to Mary,

and all that day her step was listless and her spirit dejected. She did not seek to struggle with her love. It was her life; and she lived it with a thankful heart, that made no bargain with the future. She read over and over again every word of the few books he had given her. Daily she paced the paths which his presence had made fairyland; and daily passed the house where he had lodged, that she might look up at the window where he had once looked down upon her.

Meanwhile, Rupert was finding that where farmers are not left to settle their own leases, and agents to provide as they please for their own little families, the possession of landed property is no sinecure. He had lived abroad like a prince, and his estate had not fared the better for his absence. He now inquired into the exact profits of his property. He renewed old leases upon new terms; discharged his bailiff; shut up the drives through his park which the whole neighbourhood had found more convenient than the turn-pike road: let off ten poachers and warned off ten gentlemen; and, as the natural consequence of these acts of economy and inspection, he became the most unpopular man in the county.

One day he had been surveying some timber intended for the axe. The weather was truly English, and changed suddenly from heat into rain. A change of clothes was quite out of Rupert's ordinary habits, and a fever of a very severe nature, which ended in delirium, was the result. For some weeks Rupert was on the verge of the grave. The devil and the doctor do not always agree; for, as the proverb saith, there is no friendship among the wicked. In this case the doctor was ultimately victorious, and his patient recovered.

'Give me fresh air,' said the invalid, as soon as he was able to resume his power of commanding, 'and bring me whatever letters have come during my illness.'

From the pile of paper spoilt by fashionable friends, country cousins, county magistrates, and tradesmen who take the liberty to remind you of the trifle which has escaped your recollection, the first letter that came under the sick man's hand was from the Irish officer's wife who had been the cause of his visit to the village of T., and thus, indirectly, the origin of his acquaintance with Mary Warner. In this letter the lady informed him that her husband had returned from Ireland, and learnt from some good-natured friend how his absence had been abused. Unhappily for all concerned, this man loved his wife, valued his honour, and was of that unfashionable temperament which never forgives an injury. Twice

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during Rupert's illness he had sent his Achates to Lindsay Castle. And the idea that the man who had wronged him might perhaps 'depart this life' without the aid of his bullet had so enraged him that he appeared to be a little touched in the head. His excitement was uncontrollable. He rambled about the country in prolonged paroxysms, sometimes of grief, sometimes of rage, weeping, gesticulating, and muttering incoherent oaths of vengeance. He shunned all society, and sate for hours gazing vacantly on a pistol which was constantly in his hand. All these interesting circumstances the unhappy fair one (who had picked up her information second hand, for she was now an alien from the conjugal bed and board) detailed to Rupert with considerable pathos.

'Now, then, for Mary's letters,' murmured the invalid. 'No red-hot Irishman there, I trust.' And Rupert took up a heap of letters he had selected from the rest, as a child who searches for sweetmeats after swallowing a black dose. Over the first three or four of them his face beamed; but presently it darkened and his lips and brows contracted. He opened another, read a few lines, and, leaping from the sofa as a man leaps when he has been shot through the heart, exclaimed to his bewildered attendant, 'Four horses to the carriage, and bring it round immediately! Do you hear? Too ill, you say? Never so well in my life. Not another word or . . . the carriage instantly—and the swiftest roadsters—I must be at T. before five this evening. Sharp! There's not a moment to lose.'

And the order was obeyed.

To return to Mary, however. The letters on which she lived in Rupert's absence had suddenly ceased. What could be the cause? Was he faithless? forgetful? ill? Alas, whatever the cause, the consequence was equally terrible to her. 'Are you quite sure there are none?' she asked every morning at the office, with a voice so mournful that the gruff postman turned to look again before he shut the lattice and extinguished the last hope. Her colour faded, her strength failed. She passed whole hours in tears, reading again and again every syllable of the letters she already possessed, or pouring forth in letters of her own, to her absent unresponsive friend, all the love and bitterness of her soul.' 'He *must* be ill!' she said to her-

[No one can fail to recognise the original of Mary Warner. In this paragraph the parts of the lovers are reversed; and in the sickening expectation with which Mary watched for the letter that never came, the author of the tale transferred to her what had happened to himself.—L.]

self at last. 'Never else could he have been so cruel.' She could bear that idea no longer. 'I will go to him, soothe him, nurse him. Who else can love him, watch him, wait on him, as I?' And the tenderness of her nature overcame its modesty. She selected a few clothes, made them into a little bundle, which she could carry in her hand; and with it stole away one morning early, in the twilight, from the house. 'If he should despise me!' she thought. And she was almost about to return, when, in the silence of the dim skies and empty fields, she was startled and terror-struck by the loud harsh voice of her brother.

Mr. James Warner had watched for several days, with a solicitude not wholly affectionate, the altered habits and appearance of his sister. He resolved to discover the cause of them, and this he had done. During her absence, he had entered her room, and opened her desk. In it he found a letter she had just written to Rupert on the subject of her design. He did not reveal to Mary the result of his fraternal investigations; but he watched her more narrowly, was up betimes that morning, saw her leave the house, followed her, and saved her. There was no mercy, however, and no gentleness in the rescue. James Warner, when he had replaced his sister under the custody of the parental roof, improved the occasion according to his lights, and after the fashion of his nature. He reviled her in the coarsest and most brutal language; denounced her to her father, and, after having effectually deprived her of the means of correspondence or escape, he entered the room which was henceforth to be her prison, and gave vent to the exultation with which he contemplated her heartbroken shame, and impotent despair. Then, in a glow of virtuous satisfaction, Mr. James Warner mounted his yellow stanhope, and took his way to the Fives Court. But these were trifling misfortunes compared with those which still awaited the unhappy girl.

There lived in the village of T. one Zacharias Johnson, a godly man and a rich. Zacharias Johnson was, moreover, a saint of the same chapel as Ebenezer Ephraim Warner. His voice was the most nasal, his holding-forth the most unctuous, his aspect the most sinister, and his vesture the most threadbare, of all that sacred tribe. To the eye of this man there was something comely in the person of Mary Warner. He liked her beauty, for he was a sensualist; he liked her gentleness, for he was a coward; and her money, for he was a merchant. He proposed for the daughter to the father and the son. The possession of her he looked upon as a

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concluding blessing sure to follow the assent of her two relations. To Ebenezer he spoke of godliness and scrip, of the delightfulness of living together in unity, and of the large receipts of his flourishing counting-house. To James he spoke the language of kindness and the world. He knew that young men had expenses. He should feel too happy to furnish Mr. James with something for his innocent amusements, if he might hope for Mr. James's influence over his worthy father. The sum was specified, and the consent was sold.

Among the many mysterious domestic phenomena which the inquirer seldom takes the trouble to account for, must be reckoned the magical power so often possessed by a junior branch over the main stem of a family, in spite of the contrary and perverse direction of the aforesaid branch. James Warner had acquired, and he exercised, a powerful influence over the paternal patriarch, although the father and the son had not a single sentiment or habit in common. But James had a vigorous and unshackled, his father a weak and priestridden, mind. In domestic life it is the mind which is the master.

Even before Mary's acquaintance with Rupert, Zacharias Johnson had once or twice urged his suit to Ebenezer. But as the least hint of it to Mary occasioned her a pang which went to the really kind heart of the old man; as, moreover, he was fond of her society and had no wish to lose it; and, above all, as Mr. James had not yet held those conferences with Zacharias which resulted in the alliance of their interests, the proposal seemed to Mr. Warner, like a lawsuit to the Lord Chancellor, as something to be discussed rather than decided.

Unfortunately for Mary, however, just about the time when her intercepted flight had exposed her to her father's resentment, Zacharias had made a convert of her brother. James took advantage of his opportunity. He worked upon his father's grief and anger. He stimulated the old man's mercantile respect for money, and his religious devotion to his sect. He obtained at last from Ebenezer a promise to enforce the marriage. Having secured this promise, he silenced the father's returning scruples, and fortified his endurance of the scenes which followed with the weeping and wretched daughter, until at last the day was fixed for the consummation of the sacrifice. It would be too painful to describe that series of minute yet inhuman persecutions which is far from uncommon in the secret records of any system of domestic authority founded on injustice. The system itself, like all tyrannies, tends to

defeat the object for which it is enforced ; for it generally ends in revolt from the oppression with which it begins. But in this case there was no active revolt ; nothing but irremediable misery.

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Mary was too gentle to resist. Her prayers became stilled. Her tears ceased to flow. Her despair was like the incubus of an evil dream which paralyses the nerves of motion while those of sensation remain acutely active under the burden of a torture the victim can make no effort to shake off. She managed at last, however, three days before the one fixed for her miserable marriage, to write a line to Rupert and get it conveyed to the post-office.

'Save me !' it said ; 'I ask not by what means—I care not for what end. Save me, I implore you, my only guardian angel. I shall not trouble you long. God knows, this is no romantic appeal. I feel that I am dying. Only let me die unseparated from you. You who first taught me to live. Be near me—teach me to die. Take from me the bitterness of death. Of all the terrors of the fate to which they compel me, nothing is so dreadful as the thought that I may no longer think of you and love you as I do. My hand is so cold I can scarcely hold the pen. My head is on fire. I think I should go mad if it were not for the thought that you could no longer love me. I hear my father's step. O Rupert, on Friday next. Remember. Save me ! save me !'

But the fatal Friday came, and Rupert came not. They dressed her in her bridal dress ; and her father went upstairs to summon her to the room below, where the few guests invited to the wedding were already assembled. When he kissed her cheek, it was so deathly cold and pale that his heart smote him. She turned towards him. Her lips moved, but she could not speak. 'My child,' said the old man, 'have you not one word for your father ?'

With a shudder which shook her whole frame like the convulsion that disperses trance, 'Is it too late ?' she cried. 'Can you not, will you not, preserve me from this awful fate ?'

There were signs of relenting in her father's eyes. But at that moment James Warner entered the room. His keen intelligence had foreseen the danger to his plans. He eyed his father and his sister without speaking to either of them. There was no need for him to say a word. The old man's countenance relapsed into an expression of mournful stolidity.

'God forgive you !' said Mary ; and, half alive, the girl descended with the two men to the little gloomy ground-floor chamber which was the state apartment of the Warner establishment.

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At a small table of black mahogany two maiden saints were sitting. They were prim and stately, starched and whaleboned without and within, withered and fossilised at heart by a selfish bigotry and the ice of sixty winters. As Mary entered the room, the two old spinsters came forward slowly and noiselessly, kissed the bride's unshrinking cheek, and, without a word of blessing, returned to their former seats, where they resumed their former posture. There was so little appearance of life in the three persons of that silent action, the two caressing and the one caressed, that it looked like a supernatural salutation between three graves: two old ones and a new. The bridegroom sat at one corner of the chilly fireplace. His attire on this occasion was more gaudy than the customary habit of his sect; and it gave a grotesque, unnatural simulacrum of gaiety to his lean figure and saturnine face.

When the bride entered, there was a faint smirk on his greasy lip, an atrocious twinkle in his half-shut sinister eyes. With a sort of preparatory shuffle, as if he were hastily getting into marching order his straggling, ill-assorted limbs, he rose up, pulled down his long yellow waistcoat, made a solemn genuflexion, and, like the maiden saints, returned in silence to his seat. Opposite to the bridegroom sat a little lank-haired boy, about twelve years old, mumbling a damp lump of heavy cake, and eyeing with a subdued, spiritless glance the whole dismal group, till at length his attention was rivetted by a large slate-coloured cat, which was sleeping on the hearthrug. He seemed to examine this creature with preternatural interest, and apparently wished but feared to awaken it by a suppressed ejaculation of 'Puss!' On the window-seat at the further end of the room sat, with folded arms and an abstracted air, a tall, military-looking man, apparently about forty years of age. He, too, rose slowly, made a low bow to Mary, eyed her for a moment with a strange look of deep sorrowful interest, sighed, muttered something inaudibly to himself, and relapsed into absolute immobility, his back leaning against the dark wainscot, his head drooped, his eyes fixed upon the ground.

This man was Colonel Monkton; the husband of the woman who had allured Rupert to T., and from whom he had recently received so ominous an account of her liege lord. Monkton had long known Zacharias; and, always inclined to a serious turn of mind, he had lately been endeavouring to derive consolation from the doctrines of that enthusiast. On hearing from Zacharias (for the saint had no false notions of delicacy), that he was about to bring

into the pale of matrimony a lamb which had nearly fallen a victim to the wolf that had invaded his own fold, Monkton expressed so warm an interest in the matter, and so earnest a desire to see the reclaimed one, that Zacharias had invited him to share the bridal cheer.

Such was the conclave assembled to celebrate the nuptials of Mary Warner. Never was a wedding party more ominous in its aspect.

'We will have,' said the father (and his voice trembled), 'one drop of spiritual comfort before we repair to the House of God. James, reach me the Hely Book.'

The Bible was brought forth, and laid upon the table. All, as by a simultaneous mechanical impulse, sank upon their knees. The old man read, with deep feeling, some portions of the Scriptures adapted to the day. The wedding guests listened to the reader in profound silence. Then he stood up, and began an extempore and fervent discourse. The attention of his audience was heartfelt. Even the lank-haired boy exhibited symptoms of intelligent and breathless interest.

'O beneficent Father,' said Ebenezer, as he approached the conclusion of his discourse (which had insensibly become the utterance of prayer), 'we do indeed bow before Thee with humble and stricken hearts. The evil spirit hath been among us; and she who was the pride and delight of our eyes hath forgotten Thee for a while. But shall she not return unto the ways Thou hast appointed for Thy children? And shall we not once more walk together in the happy communion of Thy pardoning grace? Melt, O Heavenly Father, the hardness of that heart which hath rejected Thy ways to follow after strange idols. Smite Thou, not in wrath but mercy, the rock whose springs have withered, and set free the healing waters of repentance. And now, O Father, let Thy merciful and strengthening hand be also stretched forth unto this Thy stricken servant.' (Here the old man looked at Monkton.) 'For upon his head the same affliction hath fallen, and his peace the same serpent hath destroyed.'

Monkton's sobs were audible. Ebenezer continued with increasing fervour.

'Let not all Thy waves and storms go over us. Give, we beseech Thee, unto him we pray for, the comforts of Thy Holy Spirit. Wean him from the sins and worldly vanities of his earlier days. And both to him, and to her who is now about to enter upon a new path of duty, vouchsafe that peace which the

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world cannot give, or the world's children take away. From evil suffer good to come. And, though the voice of gladness be mute among us, and the sounds of bridal rejoicing heard not within our walls, yet grant, O gracious and pitying Parent, whose love, though it reprove Thy children for their sins, yet redeems them when they stray, and uplifts them when they fall, grant that to us this day may be the beginning of a new life devoted to virtue, to happiness, and to Thee !'

There was a sob in the last accents of the old man's voice. They were followed by a long and deep silence. Even the saintly spinsters seemed affected. Monkton had returned to the window in silent but vehement emotion ; and, throwing it open, he leaned out as if for breath. Mary resumed her seat, and there she sat as before—speechless, motionless. At length James Warner said (and, though his harsh voice was softened almost to a whisper, the sound of it broke that silence like an unlooked-for and unnatural interruption), 'I think, father, it is time to go. The carriages must be coming.' He turned to the open window and looked out impatiently. Presently he exclaimed, 'Here they are !' And then in a half-inquiring tone of displeased surprise, 'No,' he added, 'that sounds like four horses.'

Almost in the same moment, as James Warner turned again to the window, a rush of hoofs and rattling of wheels were distinctly audible from the road outside. The sound increased, and suddenly stopped at the gate of Warner's house. The whole party, even Mary, started to their feet, and looked at each other. There was a noise in the hall ; the sound of a swift step along the passage ; the door was violently flung open ; and, so wan, so emaciated, so cadaverous in form and aspect, that only the eyes of affection could then have recognised him without hesitation, Rupert de Lindsay burst into the room.

'Thank Heaven,' he cried, 'I am not too late !' And, in mingled fondness and defence, he flung his sheltering arm about the slender, trembling form of Mary Warner ; who with a wild cry had thrown herself upon his bosom, and was clinging there with the desperate mechanical tenacity of a spent swimmer, when he clutches the rock to which the last effort of his strength has borne him.

Rupert's glance swept round the room with a swift, menacing gleam in it, which softened as it rested on the face of Ebenezer Warner. 'Old man,' he said, 'I have done you a wrong. I will

repair it. Give me your daughter as my wife. What to mine are the claims of her intended husband? Is he rich? My wealth trebles his. Does he love her? I love her more, ten thousand fold. Does *she* love *him*? Look at this wasted cheek, this stricken form, which shudders at the very mention of his name. Are these the tokens of her love? Does she love *me*? You know that she does. Each and all of you, you know it; and may Heaven forsake me, if by me she is ever forsaken. Give me my wife. Mine she is already, by every right that is sacred in the sight of heaven: the right to repair a wrong, to prevent a crime, to save a life, to rescue from irreparable ruin the most innocent of victims!

'Avaunt, blasphemer!' cried Zacharias; and Ebenezer Warner, quivering with indignation, gasped 'Begone!' The two old ladies looked upon Rupert as if they were about to treat him as Cleopatra treated her pearl, and dissolve him in vinegar.

All this while, Monkton (who, from the moment when Rupert burst into the room, had instinctively recognised the long-sought author of all his calamities) was leaning in a sullen vigilant attitude against the sideboard. The only viand which graced that board was the remnant of the doughy cake lately cut for the repast of the lank-haired boy; and on the plate beside it lay the table-knife with which it had been cut: a knife worn sharp, and pointed by long use. Monkton took up the knife, examined it, and kept it in his hand, but said nothing.

James Warner now advanced towards De Lindsay, and attempted to tear from his arm the girl, who still clung to it convulsively.

'Ah, is it so?' cried Rupert; and, with an effort almost supernatural in one so lately stricken to the point of death, he dashed James Warner to the ground, caught up Mary in one arm, pushed Zacharias with the other into the laps of the two old ladies, sprang through the door, and with a light step bore away his treasured burden.

'Follow him! follow him!' cried Ebenezer Warner, in an agony of helpless consternation. 'Will no one save my daughter from that man?' And he wrung his hands, without moving; for the old man's bewilderment seemed to have left him incapable of action.

'I will save her,' said Monkton, who appeared to be the only person in the room still perfectly self-possessed. And, with the knife in his hand, he followed De Lindsay down the passage, swiftly indeed, but apparently undisturbed by any violent emotion. Monkton came upon the object of his pursuit just as Rupert had lifted

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Mary (who was completely insensible) into his carriage, and was placing his own foot upon the step of it. Rupert at that moment was overflowing with exuberant gaiety. Fever and weakness, followed by a swift succession of the most vehement emotions—surprise, grief, anxiety, hope, love—in their intensest form, had strung his sensitive nerves to the highest pitch of hysterical susceptibility. The apparent completeness of his success, the sudden reaction from the desperation of despair to the rapture of victory, had more than exhilarated, they had filled with intoxication, his wasted frame and excited spirit. With the exultation of a boy he was singing to himself—

‘She is won, we are gone over brake, bush and scaur,’

when the hand of Monkton was laid upon his shoulder.

‘Your name is De Lindsay, I think?’ said the soldier.

‘At your service,’ answered Rupert gaily, as he endeavoured to free himself from the unceremonious grasp which tightened as he spoke.

‘Take this, then, into your evil heart!’ cried Monkton. And he plunged the knife twice into the bosom of the adulterer.

Rupert staggered and fell. Monkton stood over him. The soldier’s eye brightened with a light fiercer even and more horrible than that of hatred, for it was lit by insanity. He brandished the blade still reeking with the heart’s blood of his betrayer. ‘Look at me,’ he said. ‘I am Henry Monkton. Do you know me now?’

‘It is just,’ murmured the dying man. In the dust where it had fallen the body of Rupert writhed feebly. Monkton set his foot on it. The next moment it was still for ever.

Mary recovered from her swoon, to see before her the corpse of her lover, soiled, disfigured, horrible; to be dragged across it by her brother into her former prison; and to relapse with one low moan into insensibility. For two days she lingered through torturing intervals of incoherent consciousness, falling from one fit into another. On the evening of the third day, the wicked had ceased from troubling, and the weary one was at rest.

It is not my purpose to trace to their end the lives of the remaining actors in this drama of real life. I ask not the readers of it to follow with me the brief passage of the broken-hearted father to his grave; to enter the jail in which the last days of James Warner were wretchedly consumed; or to witness the acquittal of Henry Monkton on the plea of insanity. The catastrophe of my

story is unconcerned with the fate of its survivors. There was no romance in the burial of the lovers. Death united not those whom life had put asunder.

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In the small churchyard of her native village, the brief inscription is still fresh upon the simple stone that marks the grave of Mary Warner. But already along the daily course of human passions and events no trace of what she was remains. The tale of her sorrows is unknown, the beauty of her life unrecorded. No footstep lingers where she lies. No mourner visits that spot. No stranger asks whose dust is laid beneath it.

And they opened for Rupert de Lindsay the scutcheoned vaults of his knightly fathers; and there, amid the bannered pomp of heraldic vanity, they laid him in his palled and gorgeous coffin. I attempt not to extract a moral from his life. It was the vain chase of a flying shadow that rested not till it slept in the impenetrable darkness of a tomb, to which its inmate brought no honour won, and from which he sought no promise fulfilled.

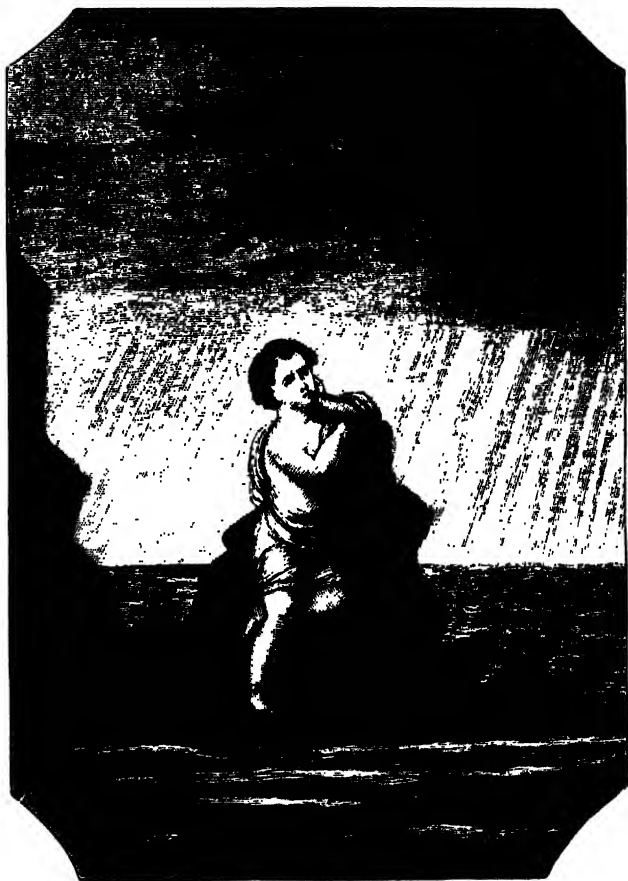
The portion of the tale which refers to Lady Melton and several particulars in the description of Mary Warner can alone be regarded as strictly autobiographical. For, in all essentials, nothing could be more dissimilar to my father's own character, at any period of his life, than the one assigned by him to Rupert de Lindsay. Yet it is not, perhaps, altogether fanciful to believe that, in this sketch of a wasted life, his imagination warningly presented to his reason an exaggerated image of what his own might become without the resolute observance of principles, and steady cultivation of qualities, which effectually counteracted in himself the epicureanism of sentiment, unrestrained by any such influences, in the character of De Lindsay.

To return, however, to Lady Caroline Lamb. Her identity with the 'Lady Clara' of 'Lionel Hastings,' and the 'Lady Melton' of 'De Lindsay,' and the exactness with which, in both stories, my father has followed his autobiographical account of the accident at the Hoo races and the presentation

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of his boyish verses, all manifest how forcibly she must have impressed his imagination. It will be seen a little later that some features of her character reappear in the portrait of Lady Bellenden, one of the personages who figure in the unfinished and unpublished novel of 'Greville,' which was begun after the publication of 'The Disowned.' The picture drawn of Lady Bellenden shows that his final impression of her, as embodied in his fictions, was, on the whole, a not unkindly one. Lady Caroline's own portrait of my father in his boyhood (that odd little drawing mentioned in his Autobiography, of a child upon a rock, surrounded by waves and clouds; symbolical, we may suppose, of the contrast between his nature and the sad conditions of life) is no inapt token of the intercourse between them. The subjoined engraving is a copy of it.]



SEUL SUR LA TERRE.

CHAPTER XIII.

*(Autobiographical.)*FIRST CONNECTION WITH A DUEL. 1825. *Æt.* 22.

In the autumn of that year I went abroad for the first time. Frederick Villiers was then staying at Boulogne; engaged, he said, in the study of Political Economy. And early one morning I burst into his room.

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‘My dear friend,’ he exclaimed, ‘you have come just in time to do me an essential service. I must fight a duel, and you must be my second.’

Herewith he commenced a narrative which I thus briefly condense.

He had been staying at a boarding-house near Boulogne. Among the boarders was General Wemyss, a tall, stout man, between fifty and sixty, accustomed to enforce authority, and fitted to exact deference. One day at dinner, my lively friend contesting one of his opinions, and having the best of the argument, General Wemyss said petulantly,—

‘Mr. Villiers, you talk too loud and too fast.’

‘Sir,’ answered Villiers, who occasionally stuttered, ‘that is a very imper-pertinent observation.’

Therewith the General waved his long arm so as to touch insultingly my friend, who was seated next but one to him.

Villiers rose, bowed to the company, and passed by the General to quit the room. Wemyss, perhaps mistaking his quiet silence for faint-heartedness, rose also, and struck him as he passed. Villiers then paused, and said,—

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‘Sir, when a gentleman forgets himself so far as to strike me in the presence of ladies, my proper course is to retire and call him out; but when a gentleman strikes me a second time, it becomes a matter of self-defence, and, instead of calling him out, I knock him down.’ Suiting the action to the word, he felled the General.

The General sent a Colonel Knight to him, demanding satisfaction. A young friend of Villiers’s, named Shafto, happened to be passing through Boulogne, and Villiers put the affair into his hands. Shafto was little more than a boy in character as in years, and no match for a veteran like Colonel Knight; who induced him to subscribe an apology to General Wemyss, without exacting a suitable apology in return. Villiers was furious on hearing this; but the second had bound the principal, and there was an end of the matter. The General, however, being, I fear, somewhat of a Bobadil, went about the *cafés*, boasting of the humiliation he had inflicted on the young hero, and reviving, in fact, the extinguished quarrel by those aspersions on courage which in that day no young man was accustomed to submit to. These aspersions had just been conveyed to Villiers, and with an intimation that they were beginning to prejudice him in the eyes of the chivalry of Boulogne. Thus stood the affair on the morning of my arrival; and the service exacted from me was to demand of General Wemyss a written denial or retractation of the injurious words ascribed to him, failing which—satisfaction.

New as I was to the philosophy of duelling, I saw that the affair was complicated; and that it would be difficult, on the strength of words reported by the gossips of *cafés*, to induce a wary and elderly soldier either to commit himself to any written declaration of a nature to content my friend, or to reopen a quarrel which had been formally closed. However, sympathising with my friend’s indignant feeling, and aware of the stigma which at that time rested upon any gentleman

who at the onset of life was suspected of showing the white feather, I undertook the mission, and waited, upon General Wemyss. I found that gentleman (just as I had expected) very indisposed to enter into the matter at all; striving to treat me as a boy, boasting much of his own military reputation and services; magisterial, dignified, sullen. At length, however, thanks chiefly to some unguarded expressions indicative of disrespect to myself (which I took up very sternly—implying that if he escaped my friend, he would have to account with me), I forced him to change his tone, and he ended by referring me to his former second—Colonel Knight. I repaired to that warrior. He was as hard to manage as the General. But I succeeded at last, not in obtaining any written retraction or denial of words uttered before many witnesses, but in arranging a hostile meeting for the next morning. My friend's thanks and joy on my return with this intelligence were evidently unaffected, and strongly contrasted with my own anxiety and fear for his safety. But the practice of these encounters (especially abroad) was then so general that every young man of fashion visiting France made up his mind beforehand that he must pass through the ordeal of single combat. The next morning my friend, who was (and is to this day) a consummate epicure,¹ took especial pains in ordering the *déjeuner à la fourchette* to which we were to return from the encounter: after which we repaired to the field—I, grave and silent; my friend, light-hearted and voluble.

After waiting a few minutes, the two hostile warriors appeared. But what was my surprise, when the General approached me as I was measuring the ground, drew me aside, and said, with a fatherly air, at once lofty and tender, 'Sir, you are very young; do not have the blood of your friend on your hands. It will be a subject of remorse to you throughout life. My aim is unerring. Do not provoke it. Say that

[¹ Frederick Villiers was survived by his two friends, my father and the late Chief Justice Cockburn.—L.]

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your friend is sorry for the mistake he committed in sending you to me, and I pardon him. I can afford to pardon him. My courage is proved. My breast is scarred with wounds in the service of my country !'

'General Wemyss,' said I, 'I am not so young as not to know that a principal who addresses words like these to the second of his adversary is sinning against every rule which a General should inculcate on his officers. And you almost tempt me to believe that the wounds you boast of were received rather on the back than on the breast.'

'The General stood speechless for a moment, and then faltered out,—

'Enough, your friend is a dead man !'

After this terrible prediction he slowly allowed Colonel Knight to place him at his post.

Two shots were exchanged. My friend's failed. That was natural, seeing that, before that day, I doubt if he had ever handled a pistol. But that a hero whose aim was so unerring should fire at least forty yards wide of the mark was more singular. Here Colonel Knight interposed, declaring that the laws of honour were amply vindicated, and that his principal was withdrawn.

'Not till he has either retracted or amply apologised for the words he has publicly uttered.'

Colonel Knight hesitated ; but the tall General approached with a majestic step.

'Young gentlemen,' he said to Villiers, 'it is true that I doubted your courage. I may so have expressed myself. I was in error. You have exposed yourself to face a British officer not unknown in the annals of his country. I retract. I apologise. I am deeply sorry for my mistake. Can I say more ? If so, I say it.' Tears rushed to his eyes, and coursed his manly cheeks. 'Young men, may you both be spared to serve your country, as I have done ! Accept an old man's blessing, and his hand.'

Thus ended the first duel in which I was engaged. We returned to the *déjeuner* Villiers had so carefully ordered. Naturally enough, my friend rose greatly in my estimation after this adventure. The *sang froid* that characterised his courage—free from all nervous excitement and all truculent swagger—was a quality that, however misapplied in the instance of duelling, might well in itself be admired. Indeed, I should doubt if a man more constitutionally brave than Frederick Villiers could be found. I have seen him on many occasions in positions of danger that might somewhat shake the hardest nerves, and in these his fearless and cool self-possession was perfect. Much in this and other attributes of the man—such as his lively humour, his playful satire on ‘common people,’ contrasted by a logical philosophy that made him, if aristocrat by temper, democrat by reason, assisted me in finishing and completing the character of Pelham. He differed from that worthy chiefly in the utter absence of the ambition which supplies motive power to Pelham, and impresses the reader with the belief that he is destined to outlive and redeem all his more frivolous feelings and affectations. But nothing could ever have induced Frederick Villiers to undergo the persevering trouble necessary to a successful career. *Le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle*, was his answer to all encouragement to him to develop and put forth his natural abilities. Perhaps the circumstances of his birth had something to do with this spirit of inaction. His mother and aunts, poor women, were always afraid that he should do something that would make the world inquire who he was.

After a short sojourn at Boulogne, during which neither of us made much progress in Political Economy, I hired a carriage and persuaded Villiers to accompany me on a tour through the principal Flemish towns, including Brussels, intending to close at Paris.

In this journey we might have enjoyed ourselves much as other young men, but for the chilling nature of my companion's

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philosophy. He had a good-natured sneer for everything that inspired me with interest. Monuments of art in painting and architecture, associations connected with the general history of Flanders and liberty, even the ordinary sentiment of pride any Englishmen might feel in exploring the battlefield of Waterloo, were to him subjects of contempt—half epicurean, half cynical. In short, I was an enthusiast in company with a man older than myself, and in many things cleverer, but who mocked at enthusiasm; and thus by degrees his very gaiety depressed me.

We concluded our tour at Paris, and I was not sorry when my friend took there an apartment and left me free to muse in the solitude of mine.

CHAPTER XIV.

(Autobiographical.)

SOCIAL RELATIONS WITH THE FAUBOURG ST.-GERMAIN.

1825. Æt. 22.

I FOUND my brother Henry at Paris. He had quitted Cambridge without taking a degree, and entered into the Life Guards, but soon sold out, meditating that diplomatic career in which he has since been so distinguished. He did not stay long at Paris, and while he was there we did not see much of each other.

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I soon found admission into circles of French society not often open to foreigners of my age. I became intimate at some of the most brilliant houses of the old noblesse domiciled in the Faubourg St.-Germain, and was received with marked courtesy at the select *soirées* of the principal members of the Administration. I owed some of my best introductions to a very remarkable man, who took a fancy both to Henry and myself, and expressed a warm interest in our future career. He was an Irishman and a priest, of the name of Kinsela, and bore the title of Abbé. He was, if I remember rightly, the confessor of Madame de Polignac, wife of Charles X.'s Minister, and was held in great respect by the chiefs of the Legitimist party. He was a Jesuit; he had much of the learning which distinguishes that great fraternity, and still more of their knowledge of the world and *savoir-vivre*. He was a very busy and, I should think, a very able politician;

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but, so far as I could judge, free from all personal ambition or self-seeking. He appeared poor, and lived very modestly; but on one or two occasions, when I guessed that he was in want of money, I could not persuade him to accept it, whether as gift or loan. He had, however, an intense enthusiasm for the interests of his order, and made no secret of it.

Among the houses to me most agreeable, and always to me most kindly, at which the Abbé Kinsela's introduction served to ensure my welcome, was that of the Marquise de la Rochejacquelein, the heroine of La Vendée—a lady of imposing presence, but with that frank and almost homely good-nature, combined with high breeding, which constituted the charm of manner in the old *régime*. She had two daughters, both very pleasant, and one, to my taste, very good-looking. They spoke English perfectly, which was a great aid to our friendly intercourse, as I then spoke French very ill; and, indeed, to this day I express myself awkwardly in that language. There is no trace in English society of the peculiar *bon ton* which characterised the surviving representatives of that World before the Flood—the *ancien régime*. Once familiarly admitted into their society, and it seemed as if you were made one of the family. Their cordial sweetness of manner was irresistible; and whatever their political prejudices, there was that genuine elevation of sentiment in their familiar converse that could scarcely fail to exercise a favourable influence over young men not indisposed to recognise the obligations imposed on gentlemen. Courage, honour, truth—a high but not obtrusive self-respect, which allowed neither greed nor ambition to infringe on their pecuniary, or their political, independence—were qualities that came out in their talk as naturally as perfume comes out of a flower. Their misfortunes had no doubt served to correct many of their ancestral faults. They retained, indeed, the old French sprightliness and gallantry; but I think there were very few of their *salons* in which

religion was ever turned into ridicule, or in which any immorality was paraded. Their ease of manner was always noble, their freedom of talk admitted wit and shunned indecorum.

Among these distinguished families there was a young lady who had passed her childhood in England; who had a marked preference for English ways and literature; who had a very good fortune, and boasted a very illustrious historical name. I soon discovered that it was the great desire of the Abbé Kinsela to form a matrimonial alliance between that young lady and myself. At last he fairly proposed it to me.

'Pooh!' said I, 'a girl of so high a rank, and with such great pretensions of fortune and person, must look much higher than me. I appear richer than I am; I am but a younger son, living chiefly on an allowance from my mother. And though, I suppose, I am of a family old enough to satisfy a Frenchman's pride of pedigree, I have neither inherited nor made a position in the world that would qualify my presuming to Mademoiselle ——'s hand.'

'You know my footing in the family,' replied the Abbé, 'and you will not disbelieve me when I say that, if you propose, you will be accepted both by the lady and her parents.'

'But she is Roman Catholic, and I am Protestant. *Entre nous*, I mean to remain Protestant.'

'That as you please; I don't pretend to convert you. But the difference of religion will be no obstacle, unless you make it one.'

This conversation set me thinking. I was not in love with Mademoiselle ——, but I felt that I could easily become so. Her person and manners were exceedingly attractive. I liked her conversation, and discovered in her turn of mind much that was congenial to my own. She had been admirably brought up, and belonged to a family in which all the women were chaste as all the men were brave. In a social and worldly point of view, Mademoiselle —— would have been a

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suitable match for an English duke. After some reflection, I wrote to my mother fully on this subject; saying that if such a marriage would please her, I proposed to ascertain for myself how far the Abbé's overtures were justified by the predisposition of the lady and her parents, and that, if so, I thought I could be very happy in the union. But that, if she disliked the idea of my marrying a foreigner, my heart was not yet irrevocably gone; and, for fear it should be, I should discontinue my visits to the house. My mother's reply decided me. She had a great horror of Popery, and could not endure the thought of my marrying a Roman Catholic.

I found it required a stronger effort than I had first supposed to wrench my thoughts from the prospect that had been so alluringly held out to me. But I felt that honour and duty compelled me to persevere in the effort. I ceased to visit at the house where I had been so familiar a guest, and sought distraction of thought partly in the world, partly in literary occupation.

About this time one of those visitations of great melancholy to which I was subject during all my younger life—and from which to this day I am not wholly free—came upon me, and grew strong and stronger, deep and deeper. Gradually I withdrew myself much from the gaieties natural to my youth, and lived greatly alone. I wrote some poems, which I privately printed at Paris, under the name of 'Weeds and Wildflowers.' They have never been published, and I do not think ten copies have been given away. I also recast and nearly completed the sombre tale of 'Falkland.' Besides these achievements, I studied with critical attention the standard French authors. At last, finding that literary occupation of this nature only fed my melancholy, I made a determined resolve to wrestle with myself against it. I left Paris abruptly, took an apartment at Versailles, where I did not know a soul, and tried the effect of healthful physical exercise in restoring the mind to

that cheerful view of life which is essential to its just equilibrium. I had with me my favourite Andalusian horse; and, rising early, I forced myself to ride out daily, in all weathers, for nine or ten hours, till it grew dark. I returned home sufficiently fatigued to ensure a good appetite and a sound sleep. All my life through, I have found the necessity of intervals of complete solitude for the cure of the morbid symptoms which half solitude engenders.

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